AMERICAN LABOR'S GLOBAL AMBASSADORS

The International History of the AFL-CIO during the Cold War

EDITED BY
GEERT VAN GOETHEM &
ROBERT ANTHONY WATERS JR.

American Labor's Global Ambassadors

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Robert Anthony Waters, Jr.

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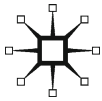

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For Hilde
G.V.B.

For my parents:
Audrey O'Mohundro
Robert Waters, 1934–1968
Robert Sheehan, 1933–1981
Donald O'Mohundro, 1939–2008
R.A.W.Jr.

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Foreword

A serious historiography of the international trade union movement hardly existed during the Cold War. In the past decades, however, research about the subject has progressed with great strides. Despite the relative paucity of source materials, we now have available a solid study of the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) in the interwar years by Geert van Goethem; a massive publication about the Communist Profintern in the same era by Reiner Tosstorff; a history of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in the half-century since its foundation in 1949 by Anthony Carew and others; and a monograph about the World Confederation of Labor by Patrick Pasture. Works have also been published about regional organizations such as the Latin-American Confederation of Trade Unions (CLASC-CLAT), the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), by authors such as Magaly Rodríguez García and Gerhard Wahlers, as well as studies of quite a few International Trade Secretariats (nowadays called "Global Unions"). In addition, there are now several biographies of influential union leaders at the global level, like those of Johannes Sassenbach and Edo Fimmen.[1]

Important gaps nevertheless do remain in our historical understanding of global unionism. Both in the field of institutional history—viewed from the top end of the organizations—and in the field of social history proper—viewed from the perspective of the rank-and-file members—a lot of research still needs to be done. As yet we lack any comprehensive history of the World Federation of Trade Unions founded in 1945. Moreover, few labor historians have probed the relationships between individual unions within global confederations, or the relationships between different global union confederations.From a social-historical perspective, a central question is: What did trade union internationalism really mean for the rank and file, in practice? More specifically: Did the ordinary members actually know that their union was affiliated to an international union federation? Were the international contacts of any real use for the cadres and ordinary members? Or were the international contacts in reality much more an opportunity for lolly trips and grandstanding by national union representatives? A careful and comprehensive examination of the historical evidence, required to answer these questions seriously, is still lacking. What we do know is that the power relationships between different countries were to a great extent—though never completely—mirrored within international labor organizations. Thus, during the first half of the twentieth century, the German and British trade unions were very prominent within the IFTU and the International

Secretariats, and for the same reason, the US-based AFL-CIO played a big role in global union affairs after World War II.The present collection of essays fills a number of important gaps in our historical knowledge, primarily "from above," though here and there also "from below." The contributions included are not only based on trade-union publications and other printed material. They also show thorough archival research in the United States as well as in some other countries. This approach enables the authors to break through the rather schematic interpretations that have dominated much of the literature until now. It is certainly true, as most historians acknowledge, that the AFL-CIO constituted an important anti-Communist force. The AFL-CIO indeed collaborated with the CIA and evidently had no scruples in helping to subvert or overthrow enemy governments and political regimes. But that is obviously not the whole story of its role and activities. Actually, the collaboration of the AFL-CIO with the CIA was by no means always a smoothly run affair. Organizations in the Global South "operated on" by the AFL-CIO were not simply puppets or victims, but had their own independent agendas. And, different political objectives were sometimes uncomfortably at odds with each other—for example, anti-Communist campaigning clashed with extending solidarity to striking workers. It is also shown here that the AFL-CIO was traditionally very much a *male* organization, which had little regard for the interests of women.I applaud the authors and editors of this volume for their painstaking historical research and their conscientious effort in reporting their findings, which surely represent a new landmark in the historiography of international unionism. They set an example and a standard of work that, I hope, more historians of the subject will follow in the future.

Marcel van der Linden

Note

1. A first attempt to list the relevant publications thematically is provided in Marcel van der Linden, "Conclusion: The Past and Future of International Trade Unionism," in *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions*, eds., van der Linden, et al. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000).

Acknowledgments

The Amsab-Institute for Social History (Ghent, Belgium) originally proposed the idea of publishing this book. Ghent University, the Gerrit Kreveld Foundation, and Ohio Northern University have provided financial and logistical support.

This book contains the revised versions of papers initially presented at the workshop on *The AFL-CIO and the International Cold War: Problems, Paradigms and Pragmatic Responses* (Ghent, Belgium, October 7–8, 2011).

In particular, the authors would like to thank Prof. Dr. Federico Romero, European University Institute, Fiesole, for his valuable contribution in brilliantly synthesizing and critiquing the chapters. The paths he offers for further study are a valuable contribution in themselves. He is a delight to work with and his chapter is a pleasure to read.

We would also like to thank our editors at Palgrave Macmillan, Chris Chappell, Sarah Whalen, and Ryan Evans, as well as the referee whose comments in support of publishing the book made us quite proud. Deepa John oversaw production for Newgen Imaging Systems. Everyone's enthusiasm for the project has been greatly appreciated.

Waters would like to thank John Curiel, a junior at Ohio Northern University, whose Kantian work ethic, leavened with keen intelligence, provided invaluable assistance in putting the book together.

Waters would also like to give special thanks to Magaly Rodríguez García. After Hurricane Katrina destroyed Waters' home and university, her shaming of the State Department into providing assistance for him to attend the 2006 European Social Science History Conference led to the meeting with van Goethem that was the genesis for this book. She is a remarkable woman.

And, of course, Sarah, Donald, and Robby make it all worthwhile.

Introduction

Robert Anthony Waters, Jr. and Geert van Goethem

The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)'s foreign policy is one of the last overlooked subjects in the field of Cold War history. John Gaddis ignored in his *The Cold War: A New History*[1] as did the editors and authors in all three volumes of the seemingly comprehensive *Cambridge History of the Cold War*,[2] and labor barely rated a mention in Frances Stonor Saunders' *The Cultural Cold War*.[3] Unless readers of mainstream Cold War historiography read the fine chapter in Hugh Wilford's recent *The Mighty Wurlitzer*[4] or Ted Morgan's biography of Jay Lovestone, *A Covert Life*,[5] they would know almost nothing about the important and often controversial part that organized labor in the United States played across the world.

That scholars have managed to overlook the AFL-CIO's role is puzzling. It is a story filled with intrigue, fascinating characters, and drama. The union's international affairs guru, Jay Lovestone, was the defrocked leader of the Communist Party of the United States turned anti-Communist of such intensity that he alienated the CIA officers who provided assistance to labor's international projects. His union intervened in postwar France and Italy by working to split Communist-led unions and breaking strikes that threatened to bring down both countries' economies and governments. The AFL-CIO immersed itself, often controversially, in Latin America, where it assisted anti-Communist trade unions and actively opposed Leftist governments. In Africa, it worked with trade unions to end colonialism and in support of modernization. In Vietnam, it assisted local trade unions in their doomed effort to protect labor and carve out an independent space in the midst of war and dictatorship. Yet this story has been virtually ignored, in large part because historians sometimes live in different worlds. Until recently, those historians who are well versed in official diplomatic history and the history of foreign policy have tended to ignore largely or completely the interaction with social movements that often do not operate through the conventional and official channels, while social historians have generally limited themselves to the national context,

often disregarding the dynamics resulting from the complex interaction between national players and transnational ambitions.

This volume is a step in filling this lacuna.

* * *

For the AFL-CIO's leaders, steeped in the ideas of "business unionism" or "pure-and-simple unionism"—the pursuit of "bread-and-butter" practical goals rather than societal transformation, as encapsulated in AFL founder Samuel Gompers' famous demand for "More!"—freedom for the working class required that their trade unions have complete independence from government control. Rule by Communists, Fascists, and all totalitarians meant the end of labor freedom, they argued, because the workers' "boss" was the government, which controls the businesses for which they worked and the trade unions that ostensibly represented them. It followed from this reasoning that the AFL-CIO's leaders believed that thwarting Communist designs on local labor movements was prerequisite to constructing free trade unions and creating prosperity for workers of the world. Battling communism often meant working in conjunction with the US government, including the State Department, the Agency for International Development (AID), and the CIA as well as its predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). For the AFL-CIO, the imperatives of saving Western Europe from Stalinism, rolling back Soviet gains in Eastern Europe, and containing communism around the world were central to what they perceived as labor's internationalist role. In itself, that would be a sufficient reason to make a thorough study of the AFL-CIO's international activism. But there is more to it than that. Not only the AFL-CIO, but almost every national trade union movement developed a foreign policy vision as well, and a number of the major powers' unions, such as those in Great Britain, were very actively engaged in foreign affairs. Cooperation between national unions and both governments and secret services was therefore the rule rather than the exception. But none of these other national unions developed direct intervention tools, that is, tools to interfere in the internal affairs of other national unions, not to say in the foreign affairs of other countries. In this respect, the AFL-CIO was as unique as it was tenacious.

Likewise in the "Third World," the AFL-CIO sought to help trade unions to throw off the shackles of colonialism, overcome "uneven development," and modernize their economies and politics. Anticommunism played at least some part in each of these endeavors because growing political consciousness in the Third World gave communism extra opportunities to expand. The AFL-CIO's aim was to prevent trade unions in these countries from turning to communism. It meant in theory that trade union movements could develop freely in these countries and that workers were as entitled as business was to a fair share in the resulting improved social welfare.

The combination of anticommunism and CIA ties has produced a literature on the AFL-CIO Cold War foreign policy that has been overwhelmingly Leftist in political orientation and tending toward journalistic exposé rather than scholarly analysis, largely focusing on alleged and proven operations run against Leftist

governments in coordination with the CIA. Only in the past 25 years has a more nuanced perspective emerged thanks to the opening of important labor files such as the AFL and AFL-CIO International Affairs collections at the University of Maryland (formerly housed at the George Meany Memorial Archives in Silver Spring, Maryland); the Jay Lovestone papers at Stanford University's Hoover Institution in Palo Alto, California; the International Affairs collections of the CIO and the United Auto Workers (UAW) at Wayne State University's Walter P. Reuther Library in Detroit, Michigan; and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) papers at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. (Indeed, the dispersal of US labor's archives, of which these are only a few, has made the thorough primary-source study of AFL-CIO foreign policy difficult and therefore limited.) The authors whose work is collected in this book have used these labor archives to focus on a more global approach to the phenomenon of an "activist" American trade union movement. Several chapters discuss the AFL-CIO/CIA connection and will assess its consequences for the union's aims and global actions during the Cold War. Despite the authors' political perspectives ranging from Leftist to Cold Warrior, each chapter relies on primary sources from the United States and around the world. They have been far more judicious in their portrayals and criticisms of the AFL-CIO's foreign policy than has been the case in past works such as Ronald Radosh's *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy*[6] and Gary K. Busch's *The Political Role of International Trades Unions*.[7] Likewise, the book benefits from its collaboration and Cold War focus, allowing it to go much further afield than Kim Scipes, *AFL-CIO Secret War against Developing Countries: Solidarity or Sabotage?*[8] Each chapter focuses on a broad topic in the field of the AFL-CIO's foreign policy or on a specific region or country.

Geert van Goethem, *From Dollars to Deeds: Exploring the Sources of Active Interventionism, 1934–1945*, examines the AFL's foreign policy from Hitler's rise to power until the early days of the Cold War. He focuses on the questions of how labor shaped this policy: Who oversaw it, what were their main objectives, which methods did they use, and what instruments did they create to achieve their goals?

Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *The American Federation of Labor's Cold War Campaign against 'Slave Labor' at the United Nations*, focuses on the AFL's campaign to bring world attention to the "slave labor" camps in the Soviet Union during the early 1950s. Especially significant in this study is how American labor leaders worked with their European counterparts and allied themselves with the US government, including the CIA, to help achieve their goals.

Yevette Richards, *Marred by Dissimulation: The AFL-CIO, the Women's Committee, and Transnational Labor Relations*, describes how the AFL-CIO undermined the Women's Committee of the ICFTU. She describes how the AFL-CIO propagandistically offered public support for women's full labor rights while taking almost no part in the committee's deliberations and marginalizing the union's women representatives who sought to work with it.

Alessandro Brogi, *The AFL and CIO between "Crusade" and Pluralism in Italy, 1944–1963*, tells the surprising story of how the anti-Communist crusade in

postwar Italy gradually morphed into a flexible and nuanced approach that allowed more discretion to Socialist groups while providing openings to the Left in Italy and other Western European governments.

Barrett Dower, *The Influence of the American Federation of Labor on the Creation of the Force Ouvrière, 1944–1954*, explores the successful efforts by AFL European representative Irving Brown to win over dissident trade unionists in France's Communist-dominated General Confederation of Labor (CGT), leading to the split that produced the anti-Communist *Force Ouvrière* (FO). Dower shows how Brown's combination of hard-charging anticommunism and bribery helped to launch and nurture the FO, and how his aggressiveness and dogmatic refusal to compromise with democratic socialism and neutralism led to a rapid loss of influence over the democratic French labor movement.

Eric Chenoweth, *AFL-CIO Support for Solidarity: Moral, Political, Financial*, describes how the AFL-CIO provided public support and material assistance to Poland's Solidarity trade union. He shows the US union's essential role in Solidarity's survival and ultimate victory against Poland's Communist government, and how the AFL-CIO took a substantively stronger position in support of Solidarity than did the administration of President Ronald Reagan.

Dustin Walcher, *Reforming Latin American Labor: The AFL-CIO and Latin America's Cold War*, provides an overview of US labor's intervention in Latin America. He shows how its representatives worked to export the liberal US model of labor internationalism, which called for the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively, for organized labor to maintain its independence from the state, and for unions to accept, and the state to defend, private property rights. Walcher shows how the uncompromising "with-us-or-against-us" approach of the union's Latin American representative Serafino Romualdi contributed to the Latin American critique of the AFL-CIO as an agent of US imperialism.

Magaly Rodríguez García, *The AFL-CIO and ORIT in Latin America's Andean Region, from the 1950s to the 1960s*, focuses on the relationship between US and Latin American trade unions within the *Organización Regional Interamericana de Trabajadores* (ORIT), the inter-American regional organization of the ICFTU. She shows that the ORIT was more than a US-dominated puppet for anti-Communist propaganda, instead arguing for a more textured narrative in which Latin American trade unions followed their own interests for regional development and national need, sometimes in opposition to the AFL-CIO.

Robert Anthony Waters, Jr., *More Subtle than We Knew: The AFL in the British Caribbean*, compares the differences between the AFL's treatment of the radical and nationalistic labor and political movements in British Guiana and British Honduras during the early 1950s. By comparing these divergent AFL policies, Waters creates a test case to show that on the question of nationalism, the AFL was less reflexively anti-Communist than scholars have heretofore portrayed: Its policy in the British Caribbean showed that its leaders could draw distinctions and support radical but independent anticolonial nationalists.

Larissa Rosa Corrêa, *"Democracy and Freedom" in Brazilian Trade Unionism during the Civil-Military Dictatorship: The Activities of the American Institute for Free Labor Development*, focuses on AIFLD's work in Brazil, particularly São Paulo—the

nation's largest industrial city—during the most repressive period of the military dictatorship. She shows that the military government accepted AIFLD's aid but rejected the AFL-CIO's effort to implant the US labor model of "business unionism" in Brazil.

Angela Vergara, *Chilean Workers and the US Labor Movement: From Solidary to Intervention, 1950s–1970s*, focuses on the complex story of the alliances and conflicts, interventions and solidarities, that constituted the AFL-CIO's relationship with the Chilean labor movement. She shows how Chilean labor actors were able to approach, negotiate, and obtain substantial economic and political resources from US labor unions while maintaining their autonomy prior to the Pinochet coup. Of particular note, Vergara tells the surprising story of how, following the military coup and suspension of civil and labor rights, US labor organizations played a critical and often overlooked role in denouncing the military government and supporting local labor struggles in Chile.

Mathilde von Bülow, *Irving Brown and ICFTU Labor Diplomacy during Algeria's Struggle for Independence, 1954–1962*, explores the AFL-CIO's relationship with Algeria's trade union movement during the Algerian civil war. Von Bülow demonstrates how the AFL-CIO was the driving force that brought the ICFTU into support of Algerian trade unionists. She wrestles with the question of the relative weight between the US union's support for anticolonialism and its anti-Communist goals.

John C. Stoner, "We will Follow a Nationalist Policy; but We will Never Be Neutral": American Labor and Neutralism in Cold War Africa, 1957–1962," focuses on Ghana and Kenya to illustrate the difficulties that faced the AFL-CIO in Sub-Saharan Africa from the 1960s to the 1980s. He shows how disparate problems such as African Cold War neutralism, the AFL-CIO's lack of local labor contacts, and limited US government support circumscribed the influence of US trade unionists and helped lead to rejection of US-style trade unions that are independent from government control.

Edmund F. Wehrle, Jr., *"Free Labor Versus Slave Labor": Free Trade Unionism and the Challenge of War-Torn Asia*, argues that international support for "free trade unionism" in the struggle against totalitarian domination drove the AFL-CIO into Southeast Asia by the 1950s in support of a large and potentially influential South Vietnamese labor movement. Wehrle shows that the AFL-CIO's effort was undermined by the deep cleavages caused by the Vietnam War, which divided the US labor movement and drove a wedge between labor and its liberal allies. In the maelstrom of war, the AFL-CIO's close association with the CIA and other government agencies further undercut the AFL-CIO's image as an independent trade union.

Federico Romero, *Transnational Labor Politics in the Global Cold War*, concludes by assessing each of the chapters and suggests how scholars can build upon this book to extend our understanding of the AFL-CIO's role and impact on the Cold War and the post-Cold War world.

Individually and together, these chapters raise and bring us closer to answering key questions about the AFL-CIO's Cold War foreign policy. Why did an organization, which relied almost exclusively on national action to achieve its primary

objective (i.e., to defend and promote the material interests of its members), make such strenuous efforts and take such drastic steps to assist foreign labor unions by intervening in labor crises around the world? Was it because of its membership, which was ethnically diverse, with workers coming from all over the world and maintaining contact with their homelands? Was it because its leaders were dissatisfied by the impotence of international trade union organizations? Did they feel impelled to act because of American public opinion, which increasingly believed in the superiority of the American labor and political models? Why were they motivated to promote these models with such missionary zeal? And when the AFL-CIO intervened abroad, how much could it and did it operate free from US government control?

The authors address these questions and draw some tentative conclusions while providing new avenues for global research. This approach takes the field to a point well beyond the one-dimensional perspective that has heretofore dominated. For the AFL-CIO's activism was not only about cooperation with secret services and blind anticommunism, and it was certainly more than rendering services to US presidents, pure and simple. There were compelling ideological and political reasons for the AFL-CIO to act as it did. This book will explore them.

Notes

1. John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
2. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012, three vols.).
3. Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 2001).
4. Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
5. Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone: Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spy Master* (New York: Random House, 1999).
6. Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1969).
7. Gary K. Busch, *The Political Role of International Trades Unions* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983).
8. Kim Scipes, *AFL-CIO Secret War against Developing Countries: Solidarity or Sabotage?* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010).

Part I

The Global Activism of a National Trade Union

Chapter One
From Dollars to Deeds: Exploring the Sources of Active Interventionism, 1934–1945

Geert van Goethem

This contribution aims to find out what lies at the root of American trade union activism. It wants to examine how *its practices and tools have been shaped and especially* why *the American trade union movement was so actively involved with faraway countries and issues in which it should have but the remotest of interest at first sight.*

Why is it that trade unions adhere to the foreign policy of their country or administration? Different explanations have been provided. Unions sought to achieve their objectives in this way, realizing that taking a purely national approach would not prove successful. Or they offered their services to the government for the sake of immediate or future benefits (or hoped-for benefits), a kind of bargain. Or unions or union leaders sought to strengthen their position domestically.[1]

However, anti-Fascist, anti-Nazi, and anti-Communist American Federation of Labor (AFL) policies[2] are an entirely different matter. They go far beyond supporting and strengthening US foreign policy. They involve direct interference with the domestic interests of other countries and the policies of other trade unions. So on what grounds were these policies justified? Did the AFL consult with the US State Department about them? Or did it follow its own logic and set its own agenda?

The AFL is certainly not the only union that has taken an interventionist approach, but one is struck by the sheer scale of it. Interventionist views held by other national trade union federations—such as the British, Dutch, or Belgian—usually had to do with the domestic sphere of influence, that is, the colonies and dependent territories of their respective countries.[3] In this respect, American trade union interventionism did not differ. Initially, its main focus was on the US sphere of influence.

International Commitment: From Gompers to Green

Until World War II, short periods of intense AFL international activism alternated with longer periods in which the AFL seemed to have lost all interest in international affairs and was absent from the international stage.

Samuel Gompers[4] presence did not go unnoticed at international meetings. Attending a meeting of the International Secretariat of the newly established National Trade Union Centers,[5] in 1909, he promptly suggested remolding this unambitious body into a platform for action against "blacklegging."[6] His proposal was rejected, but this did not stop him from playing a prominent international role as of 1911, when the AFL formally joined the International Secretariat. Why did he do so? Undoubtedly, because he wanted to prevent the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, a rival US labor organization) from gaining international recognition.[7] Also, as historian John Windmuller suggested, because he "did believe that the principles of the AFL were valid ones and of potential value to all those trade unions which were floundering in the uncertainties of scientific socialism."[8] At the time, the German model of social democracy had not yet prevailed in Europe and the international trade union movement seemed a suitable tool to promote the AFL model—politically neutral business unions—and fight the politically committed unions. Here, as so often, strengthening domestic positions was one of the most compelling reasons for international union action.

The international trade union movement fell apart during World War I. The AFL aligned itself with US foreign policy and so did the other trade unions vis-à-vis the policies of their respective governments. The AFL maintained a neutral position until the United States entered the war in 1917. The union subsequently adopted a virulent anti-German attitude and became respectable during the war, thus greatly increasing its membership. In contrast, the IWW was demonized and marginalized, while the AFL managed to get access to the "inner circles of government"[9] through close cooperation with the Woodrow Wilson administration. Wilson's war objectives, his vision of a peaceful new world order, and his views on free trade closely matched the views of the majority of AFL members. Hence, Gompers and his followers willingly promoted these ideas during their frequent meetings with union leaders of the Allied nations.[10] He conducted himself as the "representative" of the US administration within the international labor movement, although he was not given a formal mandate to do so. He maintained good relations with the White House and the State Department, which never refuted his claims. Quite the contrary. Taking part in a mission to Europe, in September 1918, he was welcomed as a statesman. He visited the front line, was received by the Italian king, dined with the French minister of foreign affairs, and spurred the unions of the Allied nations to align themselves with the policies of their respective governments, which amounted to support for "complete victory over militarism."[11] Gompers was so zealous in supporting the US war policy that he became one of the most ardent champions of a military solution "*jusqu'au bout*," opposing any peace agreement involving a compromise. As late as February 1919, he bluntly refused to participate in an international meeting of union leaders from the different sides because the Versailles peace conference had not yet concluded.

His views alienated him from the European labor movement but, obviously, this did not matter a great deal to him because he continued to push others to adopt the AFL model of domestic political neutrality. Gompers let his worldview be his guide. He envisaged that a coalition of "organized workers of the Anglo-Saxon countries including Great Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia"[12] would come into existence, which would define future labor policies and relations to a great extent. Hence, he did not perceive that the trade union movement would split along ideological lines, instead of geographical lines. He was therefore not able to differentiate between the more moderate and the more radical tendencies within the Socialist movement, and lumped together "the Bolsheviki, the Socialists or any other."[13] When the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) too publicly sided with the Socialists, he lost his last ally.

The most representative European trade union federations succeeded in settling their differences in no time at all just after the war. A renewed trade union international was founded in Amsterdam, in July 1919. Old trade unionists, Socialists and German Social Democrats—the latter being disgraced by the war and behaving with great modesty—agreed upon a radical socialist discourse and a pragmatic reform program, with the eight-hour working day as their ultimate priority. The remaining "syndicalist" elements, along with the politically neutral elements, were excluded from the movement.[14] Gompers faced a tough choice, either to bend or to break, and as he would never bend, he turned his back on Europe. The tide had turned and Wilson's dream for a new world order had not materialized. So there was not much to be gained from pressing for international action. The United States was badly hit by the postwar economic crisis, forcing it to focus on its own problems and regional interests. It meant a dramatic foreign policy reversal, and once again, the AFL fully complied with the new policy, as was illustrated by the fact that it founded the Pan-American Federation of Labor in December 1919.[15] Europe perceived this as isolationism, while the old continent itself showed isolationist tendencies from 1921 onward. In reality, the international trade union movement was turned into a European trade union movement as it faced the political and economic consequences of the war: hyperinflation in Germany, unemployment, the French occupation of the Ruhr, advancing communism, and the first Right-wing nationalist dictatorships.

The economic world crisis of the 1930s resulted in renewed American interest in Europe and only then did the AFL again express an interest in developments outside of the American continent. In the meantime, Gompers had died and been replaced by William Green,[16] while radical tendencies within the international trade union movement had been eliminated. Sir Walter Citrine,[17] a moderate British union leader and the IFTU president, tried to persuade the AFL to join the movement again. Initially, he was not successful, but two unrelated developments were to have a major influence on AFL views in the mid-1930s.

US membership in the International Labor Organization (ILO) was the first development. The ILO, a specialized agency of the League of Nations, was established by the Versailles Treaty. Like the League itself, it clearly bore a US stamp, although the United States had refused to join the ILO in 1919. When the United States finally joined in 1934, despite the fact that isolationist views remained

largely dominant, it could be considered a first sign of greater openness. However, the AFL was immediately facing a problem, as an American representative to the ILO Workers' Group had to be appointed. Robert J. Watt[18] was eventually elected, with the support of the European unions. The AFL leadership had opposed his candidacy, but worked out its own way of solving the problem. They made him "an offer he could not refuse," giving him a job and thereby securing AFL representation within the Workers' Group and a permanent AFL representative in Geneva. The AFL now joined an inner circle, which was dominated by its former European IFTU friends and was confronted with the damaging effects of its dislike of Europe.

The second development, which was to have a major influence on the AFL's views, had to do with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). For the first time since World War I, the AFL faced a national rival organization of some importance. Moreover, many CIO unions felt much closer to the European trade union movement than did the traditionalist AFL, with regard to either their profile or the personality of their leaders. The controversy over who should serve as the ILO's American representative had set the AFL's alarm bells ringing for the first time, and it did not seem unlikely that the vacuum it left on the international stage would be filled by the CIO. Eventually, this threat proved decisive and the AFL rejoined the IFTU in August 1937. As early as 1938, it threatened to resign if the IFTU would consider granting membership to the Soviet Russian trade union . . . .

The Labor Chest[19]

This chapter does not explore the relationship between the AFL and the trade union international, but it does provide insight into the AFL's motives. On two occasions, the AFL wanted to checkmate a domestic rival and strengthen or secure its domestic position. And on both occasions, this coincided with increasing US openness to the world, which resulted in a more positive attitude toward international contacts.

However, this development was paralleled by another development in which, for the first time, we may detect a pattern for future activists to follow. The most militant US unions included Italian and Jewish immigrants, who often held radical political views. These Socialists, Anarchists, and Communists were horrified by the persecution of their fellow citizens in their home countries and wanted to participate actively in the fight against Fascism and Nazism. Their communities were scattered across the United States; they had various professions and were engaged in various unions. In New York, with its high concentration of Italian and Jewish immigrants, they represented the largest group in a number of economic sectors such as the clothing industry. As early as the beginning of the 1930s, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), whose members were predominantly Jewish and Italian immigrants, started collecting funds to support refugees, spurred on by the union leaders David Dubinsky[20] and Luigi Antonini.[21] Dubinsky, who maintained good contacts with many European union leaders, intended to commit the entire American trade union movement to the fight against Fascism in Europe.[22] In 1934, along with the influential Jewish Labor

Committee, he extended an invitation to TUC secretary-general Sir Walter Citrine to tour the United States, on the occasion of which Citrine was also welcomed at the AFL Convention in San Francisco. A staunch anti-Communist of noble birth, Citrine succeeded in convincing the AFL leadership to engage in the international fight against Fascism, although the AFL was initially suspicious of such a move. Nonetheless, the AFL became a founding member of the "Chest for Liberation of Workers of Europe." Its aim was to distribute anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi propaganda in the United States as well as to provide material assistance to the victims of totalitarian regimes in Europe. Regional AFL sections across the country were to set up local committees to raise money. Also, a national board was set up, which was neither part of the AFL nor formally separate from it, yet included were prominent AFL leaders, such as Matthew Woll, Dubinsky, Green, and George Meany.[23] Meany, having just been appointed chairman of the New York State Federation of Labor, gained his first experience dealing with international affairs while serving on the board of the Labor Chest.[24]

The Labor Chest proved to be short-lived, lasting less than three years. The network of local committees did not materialize and the committees that did come into existence were scattered throughout the country and not very active. Raising funds proved to be difficult as well for the "International Unions,"—the large AFL confederations. The money was almost exclusively provided by the clothing industry unions, except for a few contributions by the miners and transport unions. Moreover, the Chest also had difficulty in distributing the funds. They were put at the disposal both of the IFTU and of the Modigliani Fund,[25] but it remained obscure how the money was spent and the Chest had no direct control over it anyway. The Chest even provoked a fierce row among the international unions in Europe, when it became obvious that the IFTU had kept the money for itself.[26]

Within the United States, however, it could claim some success as propaganda. There was a much talked-about boycott campaign of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games; Citrine, Modigliani, and Julius Deutsch[27] successfully toured China; and a mega-event was staged at Madison Square Garden in 1934, in which Albert Einstein and New York mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, among others, took part.

Perhaps even more important is that the Labor Chest brought together a number of leading figures who were to have a decisive influence on the AFL's foreign policy in later years: Dubinsky, Woll, and Meany, while a little known Jay Lovestone stayed in the background. Moreover, the Labor Chest was the breeding ground for direct foreign intervention by the American trade union movement. Funds were not only used for humanitarian purposes: They were also used to finance clandestine networks on the spot.[28] Those who oversaw the Labor Chest refused to communicate about this and it was not accountable to its members for it.

Most probably, the Labor Chest did not end for lack of success. It did so because of the escalating conflict between the AFL and the CIO. In addition to Dubinsky, who remained neutral at first but eventually sided with the CIO, the two leading CIO figures, John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman, had seats on the Chest board. As the AFL consistently opposed cooperation with the CIO, the Labor Chest could not survive.

The Labor League

Dubinsky's flirtation with the CIO proved short-lived and he joined the AFL again in 1939. It did not take him long to convince the AFL management that the union had to resume its role in the international battle against Fascism and Nazism. A new initiative, The League for Human Rights, was launched along the lines of the Labor Chest model. It was introduced at the October 1939 AFL Convention in Cincinnati, and became operational as of November 1940. The full name was "The League for Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy sponsored by organized labor for the preservation and extension of democracy as the American way of life." A name and mission statement, one could say. Its organizational structure and working method were modeled on the Labor Chest. Its main goal was to mobilize support for "the British and European workers in their fight against the dictators." Once again, the union leaders created plans for establishing a broad network of local sections, launching a nationwide propaganda campaign, and organizing fundraising events with prominent figures.[29] William Green served as the honorary president, but hardly ever did he express any interest. Real power lay in the hands of the Meany–Woll–Dubinsky triumvirate. Jay Lovestone served as executive secretary.[30]

The "American Labor Committee to aid British Labor" was the League's first important project. Even before the United States entered the War, it voiced support for the British on the pretext of collecting relief funds. Again, Walter Citrine had to tour the United States and persuade AFL members at the convention, where he delivered a compelling speech, won over the membership, and got a standing ovation when he dramatically concluded by saying, "We want planes, planes, and more planes."[31] The League could now get down to work. Local committees were asked to raise money, which would be distributed with the help of the British TUC. The campaign met with little success as only the ILGWU—Dubinsky's union—pledged substantial support. The Labor Committee widened the scope of its activities after the United States entered the war. It cooperated closely with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, but suffered from the same major flaw—lack of money. In 1942, a large-scale fund-raising campaign was launched. The "relief tickets" that were printed and distributed amounted to $1,728,000, but few tickets were actually sold, as the final amount raised by this campaign was $44,353. The result contrasted sharply with Matthew Woll's pompous declarations that the labor movement consisted of three armies: the servicemen, the factory workers, and "a third army. It is an army that gives . . . it fights with its contributions, with its dollars."[32] The facts flatly contradict such claims. Nevertheless, we also know that the amount of money that was distributed largely exceeded the amount that was raised. So the question arises: Where did the money come from?

The National War Fund

The American labor movement became more powerful and influential during World War II. Throughout the War, the economy and the labor market were

largely steered by the government, and the trade unions served as essential partners in the process. They were closely involved in policy development and implementation in different fields while promising to promote and safeguard social stability. American unions had previously focused on domestic issues, and the State Department was not familiar with labor-related questions, but now each took an interest in the other. The unions got linked up closely with the state apparatus and started performing tasks that were unrelated to their initial aims, that is, to defend the material interests of their members and protect their legal rights. This lack of interest was reflected in the appointment of Meany as head of the AFL's International Affairs Department (IAD). On its face, the appointment seemed to reflect a newfound interest because Meany was a rising star. Instead, the appointment by AFL president Green was intended to sideline the hard-charging Meany, bringing him into the national leadership but sending him to a sort of internal exile in a field in which US unions had shown themselves to have no interest. But Green underestimated Meany. With his forceful personality, Meany assumed control and transformed the IAD into a kind of parallel State Department with but one main goal: provide worldwide support for the free, non-Communist labor movements. At first, Meany's ambitions were thwarted by an almost total lack of financial resources. Well-informed observers, such as Arthur Goldberg from the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), made no secret of the AFL's failure to raise money. He called AFL claims about financial support for occupied Europe, "a great deal of paper talk for advertising purposes" because "the amount which is forthcoming from this source is not substantial."[33] With Meany's ambition and genuine desire to help, it was clear that another source of funding had to be tapped.

In 1943, both the AFL and the CIO relief funds were integrated into the National War Fund, discontinuing their own fund-raising activities. The National War Fund (NWF) was a private fund-raising organization that served as an umbrella organization for many scattered initiatives. It operated independently from the US government but was monitored by the President's War Relief Control Board. So in this field too, public and private bodies were linked up. The NWF collected funds while recognized agencies submitted projects. Its mission statement clearly defined its sole objective as providing humanitarian aid such as food, medicines, clothing, accommodation, and hospitals. It excluded political and military objectives. The NWF, in three years' time, spent $343,250,000, a staggering amount of money, including $10 million for projects that were submitted by the AFL and the CIO.[34] In 1942, the AFL had raised the insignificant sum of $45,000, so this was a different world. However, there was a problem because the AFL's political objectives did not mesh with the NWF's mission statement. At this point, cooperation with another government agency proved particularly successful.

Secret Service

Even prior to the establishment of the OSS, on June 24, 1940, Jay Lovestone wrote to President Franklin Roosevelt's adviser, Ernest Cuneo:[35] "We are in a position to do a lot of work in Nazi-occupied France. We have a lot of people there with us who will fight the Hitlers, the Lavals and Goerings to the death. But what we need is

some technical arrangements to facilitate our work."[36] This marked the beginning of a new phase. Trade unionists were actively deployed as "agents" of the American secret service. Lovestone put his own personal network at the latter's disposal. It included Americans and reliable European Social Democrats who had been involved in the fight against Nazism and Fascism from the mid-1930s onward.[37]

The complex relationship between trade unions and secret services has never been fully explored, and it has never become quite clear who was more indebted to whom. When the OSS launched its operations in Europe, it entered unknown territory. The OSS was a new organization. It employed new people and, above all, it had lots of fresh ideas, which distinguished it from traditional intelligence agencies. Heber Blankenhorn, one of the senior advisers to OSS director William Donovan, was convinced that they had "to make use of the international underground (labor) organizations." The OSS could very well profit from such networks, and it established a London-based "Labor Division." It was a Secret Intelligence department and operational as of July 1942. Initially, its sole purpose was to collect information via underground networks of trade unions and leftist groups. London, with its many political refugees and trade unionists in exile, was the ideal location. It was Lovestone who introduced Arthur Goldberg, head of the Labor Division, to the London trade union community in exile, with no less than 32 letters of introduction.[38] The Labor Desk was to gradually extend the scope of its activities, ranging from merely collecting information to committing acts of sabotage and helping the military resistance. After the liberation of France and the Low Countries, the Desk moved to Paris, where OSS agents kept close tabs on developments within the international labor movement. Throughout this time, the OSS maintained contact with Lovestone and the Labor League, but managed to conceal this from the CIO, well aware that "Sidney Hillman might raise hell if he found out that the OSS was 'spying' on labor."

The relationship between the secret service and the trade unions was certainly not a superior-subordinate relationship, but rather based on mutual interest. Because the AFL itself did not raise enough money, its projects were submitted to the National War Fund. Officially, the money was intended for purely humanitarian purposes, but the OSS succeeded in appropriating some of these funds, using them "as cash relief for members of the underground in occupied countries," while the Labor League served as cover. The amounts involved were far from petty: in 1944 alone, $950,000 was transferred. The AFL-OSS partnership proved to be particularly successful, as the objectives of both the OSS (support for the underground resistance) and the AFL (support for free, "bona fide" trade unions) were met. Both the secret service and the trade union movement managed to preserve their autonomy while benefiting from mutual cooperation.

Anti-Soviet

A fierce dispute between two long-standing allies, the AFL and the TUC, had arisen in the meantime. The question was whether cooperation with allied Soviet trade unions was appropriate in the context of the upcoming peace negotiations. This was a taboo issue to the AFL leadership. They made no distinction between

communism and Fascism, and refused to consider any cooperation with communism, whatever the circumstances, including war. This was a long-held principle and no force on earth could persuade AFL leaders to abandon it. For the British, however, this was also a major issue. With Versailles at the back of their minds, they wanted to exert maximum influence on postwar reconstruction policies by securing formal representation at the coming peace negotiations for both national and international trade unions. The British believed that the way to achieve this was to make a trade union alliance that mirrored the alliance between the three superpowers. From this perspective, cooperation with Soviet trade unions was imperative. As of 1942, the British had made preparations to establish an all-inclusive World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

Understanding this division is absolutely vital to understanding postwar international trade union developments. AFL aims (freedom and democracy) and TUC aims (trade union representation and recognition) proved irreconcilable. The AFL could not and did not want to overcome these huge differences, both for domestic reasons—how could they cooperate with communism abroad but continue to refuse cooperation in the United States?—and for ideological reasons. The AFL stuck to its principles and did not side with the Roosevelt administration, which agreed with the TUC, although this was a real nuisance to the latter, which wanted to remain on good terms with the Russians and involve them in establishing a postwar world order.

Differences were huge, indeed. Throughout the war, the TUC faithfully followed the twists and turns of British foreign policy and was sent on informal diplomatic missions on several occasions to draw support for the government's war policies. The TUC leadership fully committed itself to these policies, hoping that the British government would support the trade union's efforts to achieve international representation in return. But the British also realized that support from the other two superpowers was vital to that aim, and that is why they attached huge importance to establishing a framework for structural cooperation with both the American and the Soviet trade unions.[39]

However, such international action ran counter to the AFL's views on society, American values, and fundamental human rights, such as freedom and democracy. "Labor organized in free trade unions"[40] was an essential part of these rights. Having defeated Fascism, the AFL wanted to fight communism more than ever, that is, to tackle Communist regimes and remove Communist influences from the labor movement worldwide.[41] And again, the AFL created an instrument for putting that vision into action, that is, the notorious Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), which was founded at the 1944 AFL Convention with a view to mobilizing support for rebuilding "free and democratic trade unions in Europe, Asia and Central and Latin America."[42]

With the IFTU "virtually dead" and the AFL having sidelined itself by not joining the WFTU, the FTUC now dealt with international affairs for the union and was confined to establishing bilateral relations.[43] Affiliated unions were requested to collect one million dollars, but again only a fraction of the amount was raised, that is, $170,000 over three years' time, half of which came from the IGLWU. This did not prevent the FTUC from disbursing much larger sums

until at least 1958. The FTCU was, therefore, "highly dependent on CIA finance, while providing the agency with valuable cover."[44] A practice of "covert activism" developed, drawing public attention away from the interventionist US foreign policy through "complicated foreign aid schemes to enhance United States influence abroad."[45] Any form of external supervision was lacking because these were secret operations. With CIA funds channeled to the FTCU, the AFL managed to attract allies throughout the world and launched an all-out attack against the WFTU as an exponent of international communism.[46]

The FTUC was incorporated into the Labor League for Human Rights to pursue AFL foreign-policy objectives, which were similar to those pursued by the Labor Chest. The Labor Chest leaders—Dubinsky, Meany, and Woll—were still in charge; Lovestone served as the executive secretary and Green as symbolic honorary chairman. Officially, the FTUC formed a part of the AFL, but—like the Chest and its successors—it was not accountable to the AFL bodies. To the outside world, it was merely the publisher of *The Free Trade Union News*, but as Anthony Carew has put it, "its operational side was shrouded in secrecy."[47]

It seemed that the AFL had completely isolated itself from the world by the end of the war. As to that, the situation bears a certain resemblance to the position into which Gompers had maneuvered himself at the end of World War I. However, in contrast to those years, the AFL was but relatively isolated and it was now fully capable of articulating its policies because it had people, resources, and networks at its disposal. Indeed, dollars were distributed among unions, which were perceived as "bona fide"—non-Communist—by both the AFL and the OSS/CIA. The money gave a major boost to the underground activities of these international unions. This funding also enhanced the legitimacy of the American trade union movement worldwide, as many of these organizations suffered from a chronic lack of money and were eager for the assistance.

Conclusion

The question as to how the AFL actively intervened abroad is the easiest to answer about the AFL's foreign policy during the 1930s and 1940s. As of 1934, the AFL gradually created a policy instrument for direct intervention abroad, without having to account to the AFL bodies for such action. The AFL leadership encompassed a wide set of sensibilities: Irish-Catholic (Meany), Jewish-Socialist (Dubinsky), Communist/anti-Communist (Lovestone), and conservative-nationalist (Woll). These people started working together as early as 1934 and continued after the war ended when the FTUC was founded. They had good organizational skills, developed a vast network of contacts both within and outside the labor movement, and had financial resources, although these were limited and tricky to raise from the start. They were militant leaders, not patient lobbyists, and lacked strategic negotiation skills. Hence, multilateral internationalism—slow in nature and therefore once compared to the "peregrinations of a soap bubble"[48]—was not easy for them. But they were unwavering in their convictions and held a firm belief in freedom and democracy, as some of them had experienced dictatorship themselves.

Although it is unclear to what extent AFL international action enjoyed support from the rank and file, several fund-raising campaigns unmistakably met with very little success, even in times of great need. Rank-and-file financial solidarity was lacking, to say the least, while affiliated unions also lacked the resources to live up to the leadership's lofty ambitions. External funding was therefore vital to develop an instrument for intervention. It was provided by the US government. Moreover, these services were inextricably linked with the state apparatus, and what strikes one most is how the trade unions became entangled in this web.

This chapter's purpose was not to provide a full overview of the AFL's funding and, indeed, we are facing perhaps an impossible task. Lovestone was very ingenious when it came to covering up things. Suffice it to say that large sums were involved and that opaque funding was systemic almost from the start.[49] By the end of the war, the FTUC was a smooth-running organization, with experienced staff people and sufficient resources. And the Cold War was raging.

AFL activism would, perhaps, have ceased to exist at the end of World War II, if it were not for the Cold War. However, it cannot be considered a mere offshoot of the Cold War. It originated before the Cold War, which raises the key question of why? Perhaps a comparison with TUC policies may throw new light on this issue. The TUC's foreign policy was very flexible at that time. It followed the twists and turns of British foreign policy, attuning to the prevailing geostrategic, military, and strategic considerations. The goal was clear: cooperation in return for recognition and influence, that is, for having the opportunity to defend the interests of British workers internationally and to negotiate issues that were (potentially) relevant to TUC's members. Flexibility and political pragmatism were essential to achieve the TUC's objectives. This was the essence of British policy.

The AFL's policies were quite the contrary. They were not flexible, but straightforward. When the war was entering a crucial phase and President Roosevelt desperately wanted to remain on good terms with the Soviet Union, the AFL insulted them, which was the reverse of the TUC's policy. Hence, the AFL's foreign policy cannot be labeled as pragmatic, but as missionary. Gompers and Meany pursued the same line of argument. They believed they had a "mission" and were therefore not easily susceptible to pragmatic approaches or prepared to make compromises. Perhaps, this also explains why they showed great determination in implementing the AFL's foreign policy. However, the AFL did take a pragmatic approach with respect to domestic policies and the economic crisis, as it was willing to change its views from anti-New Deal to pro-New Deal.[50] But at the international stage it saw itself as the promoter of the "preservation and extension of democracy as the American way of life." It was a matter of life and death; a fight between good and evil. It was not about the short-term interests of the union member, but about the United States itself: what it stood for and its place in the world. As to that, the AFL's international action was much more political than that of its European counterparts, although the latter were not politically neutral. European unions were associated with political parties and, therefore, AFL leaders treated them with contempt. By the end of World War II, the AFL had isolated itself from the international labor community. Old friends such as the TUC had turned into new enemies. But the AFL was not totally isolated. When the Cold War started

raging, the AFL was immediately back in the front line because it had people and resources at its disposal and found itself on familiar ground. And new enemies became old friends again.

Notes

1. John Logue, *Toward a Theory of Trade Union Internationalism* (Göteburg, Sweden: University of Göteburg, 1980); Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten, "Spionage Für Mitbestimmung: Die Kooperation der Internationalen Transportarbeiterföderation mit alliierten secret services im Zweiten Weltkrieg als Korporatistische Tauscharrangement," *Internationale Wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* 33 (1997); Geert Van Goethem, *The Amsterdam International. The World of the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), 1913–1945* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labor History* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2008).
2. In the period under discussion, the AFL enjoyed the exclusive right of representation within the IFTU. Only toward the end of World War II did the CIO succeed in breaking down the barriers of international isolation.
3. Marjorie Nicholson, *The TUC Overseas: The Roots of Policy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).
4. Samuel Gompers (1850–1924) was one of the AFL's founders and the first AFL chairman. He emigrated to the United States at the age of 13 and became a cigar maker. He joined the Cigar Makers' International Union in New York City at the age of 14. He was AFL chairman from 1886 until his death in 1924.
5. On the history of the IFTU's forerunner, see Susan Milner, *The Dilemmas of Internationalism, French Syndicalism and the International Labor Movement, 1900–1914* (Oxford: Berg, 1990).
6. It was common practice to use foreign labor as strikebreakers at the time. This acted as a spur to international trade union cooperation.
7. Gary Busch, *The Political Role of International Trade Unions* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983), 33.
8. John Windmuller, *American Labor and the International Labor Movement, 1940 to 1953* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1954).
9. Simeon Larson, *Labor and Foreign Policy: Gompers, the AFL and the First World War, 1914–1918* (Cranbury, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975), 28.
10. Elisabeth McKillan, "Integrating Labor into the Narrative of Wilsonian Internationalism: A Literature Review," *Diplomatic History* 34 (2010): 641–643.
11. Report W. H. Buckler, US Embassy in London, GMMA, Samuel Gompers Papers (henceforth, SGP), reel 19.
12. Samuel Gompers to W. A. Appleton, July 24, 1918, GMMA, SGP, reel 19.
13. Note about the Bern Conference by Samuel Gompers, December 30, 1918, GMMA, SGP, reel 19.
14. The statutes enforced Social Democratic supremacy, as they stipulated that but one national confederation per country could join the International. This meant that both Christian and "syndicalist" organizations, and—somewhat later—Communist organizations too, could be barred from joining. Likewise, the British General Federation of Trade Unions was refused membership when the TUC joined in 1921, although William Appleton had been elected as IFTU chairman at the founding congress.
15. C. W. Toth, *Bulwark for Freedom: Samuel Gompers' Pan American Federation of Labor* (San Juan, PR: Inter American University Press, 1979).
16. William Green (1873–1952) was a miner's son of Welsh immigrants. Successor to Samuel Gompers as AFL chairman in 1924, he remained chairman until his death.

17. Walter Citrine (1887–1983) was a British trade union leader, born into a fisherman's family and a self-taught man. He joined the Electrical Trades Union in 1911, and served as TUC general-secretary from 1926 until 1946, and IFTU president from 1928 until 1945.
18. Robert J. Watt (1894–1947) was a Scottish immigrant who served in the Canadian army during World War I and became an American citizen in 1919. He was chairman of the Lawrence Central Labor Union from 1925 until 1930 and vice president of the Massachusetts State Federation in 1932. Following US membership in the ILO, he was elected US representative to the ILO Workers' Group, despite the fact that William Green also stood as a candidate. He was subsequently employed by the AFL and remained the US representative to the ILO Workers' Group until his death.
19. The official name was the "Chest for Liberation of Workers of Europe"; sometimes referred to as the "Chest for Relief and Liberation of the Workers of Europe."
20. David Dubinsky (1892–1982) was born David Dobnievski in the Russian-Polish town of Brest-Litovsk. The son of a Jewish baker, he spent 18 months in prison for trade union activities, after which he was sent to Siberia. He escaped and emigrated to the United States, where he became a tailor. He joined the New York Garment Workers' Union and became secretary-treasurer of the ILGWU in 1929. In 1932, he was appointed ILGWU president and AFL vice president from 1935 until 1937 and from 1945 until 1966. He was cofounder of the American Labor Party and the New York Liberal Party.
21. Luigi Antonini (1883–1968) was an Italian who emigrated to the United States in 1908. He became an active trade union member and a member of the ILGWU executive committee in 1914, and ILGWU vice president from 1925 until 1955. He was cofounder of the American Labor Party and the New York Liberal Party.
22. Frederico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951.* Trans. Harvey Fergusson, II (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 12–14.
23. The AFL resolution expressing support for the foundation of the Chest stated: "This proposed and approved chest will at all times conform to and be guided with the wishes and requirements of the Executive Committee of the American Federation of Labor and without involving any responsibility upon the AFL." Archives of the Jewish Labor Committee, microfilm, reel 38.
24. In addition, the Chest board included Sidney Hillman (Amalgamated Clothing Workers), Charles Howard (Typographical Union), John L. Lewis (United Mine Workers), Jospeh Ryan (Longshormen's Association), Joe Weber (Musicians), Baruch C. Vladeck (Jewish Labor Committee).
25. Named after Guiseppe Modigliani (1872–1947), an Italian Socialist politician. He became leader of the Italian Socialist Party after World War I and had to flee from Italy for Paris because of the growing Fascist terror. Modigliani was a prominent Italian anti-Fascist who toured North and South America for propaganda purposes several times.
26. Correspondence between Dr. A. S. Lipschitz (Labor Chest) and Edo Fimmen (International Transport Federation), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, International Transport Workers' Federation (henceforth, ITF) Archive, Mappe 15.
27. Julius Deutsch (1884–1968) was an Austrian Socialist politician. Leader of the Schutsbund, a Socialist militia during the 1934 civil war. After the incorporation of Austria into the Third Reich, he served as a general in the International Brigades during the civil war in Spain. Settled in Paris after the Nationalist forces won the war and fled to the United States after the beginning of World War II.
28. Letter from Edo Fimmen to van der Heeg, Spiekman, De Jonghe, Lansink, Achterberg en Roelofs, Amsterdam, September 18, 1935, ITF Archive, Mappe 15, FES, Bonn.
29. David Dubinsky, Note on the League of Human Rights, November 18, 1940, Cornell University, Kheel Center, Dubinsky Papers, 5780/2 box 78 ff3d.

30. Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone: Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spymaster* (New York: Random House, 1999).
31. Walter Citrine, *My American Diary* (London: G. Routledge & Sons, 1941), 351.
32. National War Fund Bulletin, *Bulletin* no. 2, June 24, 1943, National Archives, College Park, MD (henceforth, NARA), RG 220, Box 121.
33. Arthur Goldberg to George Pratt, May 26, 1943, NARA, RG 226, E 190, B 308, F 238.
34. Harold J. Seymour, *Design for Giving: The Story of the National War Fund, Inc., 1943–1947* (New York: Harper, 1947), 90.
35. Ernest Cuneo (1905–1988) was a confidant of President Franklin Roosevelt and assistant to OSS chief William Donovan. He served as liaison officer between the OSS, the British secret services, the FBI, and the Department of State.
36. Jay Lovestone to Ernest Cuneo, June 24, 1940, Ernest Cuneo Papers, F. D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, NY.
37. Koch-Baumgarten, "Spionage Für Mitbestimmung"; D. Nelles, "Ungleiche Partner: Die Zusammenarbeit der Internationales Transportarbeiter-Föderation (ITF) mit den Westlichen Nachrichtendiensten, 1938–1945," *International Wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz zur Geschichte der Deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* 30 (1994).
38. Arthur Goldberg to Jay Lovestone, September 4, 1942, Hoover Institution, Jay Lovestone Papers, Box 702.
39. Geert Van Goethem, "Labor's Second Front: The Foreign Policy of the American and British Trade Union Movements during the Second World War," *Diplomatic History* 34 (2010).
40. AFL Post War Program, 6. Quoted by Romero, 13.
41. Joseph C. Goulden, *Meany* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 123.
42. Roy Godson, "The AFL Foreign Policy Making Process From the End of World War II to the Merger," *Labor History* 16 (1975): 327.
43. Michael Kerper, *The International Ideology of U.S. Labor, 1941–1975* (Göteborg, Sweden: University of Göteborg, 1976).
44. Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998).
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Chapter Two

The American Federation of Labor's Cold War Campaign against "Slave Labor" at the United Nations

Quenby Olmsted Hughes

In 1951, the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC) sponsored the publication of a glossy, six-inch, square pamphlet, *Slave Labor in the Soviet World,* in which the labor organization outlined its case against forced labor in the Soviet GULAGs. The authors presented their argument in dramatic red and black inks, accompanied by stark black-and-white sketches of Soviet prison life, artfully "decorated" by blood-red barbed wire. Two-thirds of each two-page spread of the pamphlet sported reproductions of the actual pieces of evidence collected to prove the charges, with the remaining third providing translations of the Russian, formatted to look exactly like the Soviet documents. On the last page of the *Slave Labor* report, the FTUC concluded with a notice printed in brilliant red ink:

> Only a small sampling of the total evidence can be reproduced here—enough, however, to reveal the truth. These bare documents, statistics, and affidavits are not addressed to scholars alone. They are addressed to the conscience of the free world. This time the world must believe.[1]

And this time, the FTUC actually had a good reason to believe that much of the world was listening. The AFL had been highlighting concerns about forced labor in the Soviet Union for several years, but had found little international reception for their arguments. But in the early 1950s, the US government, in the context of escalating Cold War tensions, took up the AFL's concerns at the United Nations, thereby directing sustained worldwide attention to the labor organization's charges.

Using US government and labor documents, this paper investigates the AFL's campaign against "slave labor." That crusade provides an interesting lens through which to examine the tense, if sometimes mutually profitable, relationship between the US government and the AFL (and other anti-Communist labor organizations).

It was not a foregone conclusion that the US government would support the campaign, although there were obvious propaganda advantages. Even though the US government welcomed the AFL crusade against "slave labor," because it brought negative attention to the Soviet Union, the same campaign forced the United States to respond to charges from the USSR, and from internal critics in the American labor movement, that America mistreated its own workers. The US government benefitted from using the labor organizations as a loudspeaker for anti-Communist concerns, but members of the US government also worried about allowing nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) too great a voice at the United Nations, potentially providing those organizations with either a pulpit for their own concerns (which might not coincide with governmental interests) or creating a situation in which those organizations overwhelmed the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with petty proposals, thereby restricting its usefulness.

The ability of the AFL to present the "slave labor" case to the ECOSOC was the result of the Cold War agitations of the international labor movement. Involvement with NGOs seemed to be an important way to increase the role of the United Nations in global affairs. According to one US Labor Department official, "It is our belief that the world labor movement can be the most effective social organization outside of the governments themselves in interpreting UN policies and programs to the peoples of the world and bringing to the deliberations the problems and recommendations for action as visualized by the workers themselves."[2]

After a lengthy discussion, the General Assembly of the United Nations invited both the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and the AFL to affiliate with ECOSOC rather than providing the NGOs with consultative status to the General Assembly.[3] By 1947, the UN had made arrangements to consult with only the four organizations considered most influential: the WFTU, the AFL, the International Cooperative Alliance, and the International Chamber of Commerce.[4] US government officials were often at best ambivalent about this relationship, and sometimes outright hostile. Adlai Stevenson wrote, "One can readily foresee the time when the Council will be smothered in the clamor of pressure groups," potentially supporting ideas contrary to the interests of the US government. The purpose of affiliating NGOs with the United Nations, he continued, "was to enable the Council to take advantage of the help and advice of these organizations, not for them to take advantage of the Council." Stevenson made it clear that the US government really would have preferred if NGOs had not had this special relationship with the Council at all.[5]

Beginning in the mid- to late 1940s, the AFL and the WFTU in fact played significant roles at ECOSOC. The labor organizations dominated ECOSOC's NGO activity and, as a result, many of the items proposed for ECOSOC's agenda were immediately relevant to workers and labor unions. Both the WFTU and the AFL (and later the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)) used the Council as a forum for evangelizing, seeking to bring attention to their own labor ideals. Among the issues placed on the agenda of the Council by the AFL in the late 1940s and early 1950s were the protection of migrant and immigrant labor, the infringement of trade union rights, the reduction of working

hours, and—most significantly for the purpose of this chapter—the prevalence of forced (or "slave") labor.[6]

ECOSOC meetings provided organizations such as the AFL and WFTU a podium on which to address the international press, and have their ideas enhanced by the larger authority of the United Nations. As the Cold War progressed, however, the labor organizations, in particular, served as vehicles through which the Americans and Soviets could attack each other. After the failure of efforts to curtail the WFTU's agenda setting, the State Department turned its attention to increasing the American voice at ECOSOC. It is in this context, in the early 1950s, that it reversed course and supported the AFL's efforts to bring attention to forced or "slave" labor in the Soviet Union.

The AFL had been agitating against "slave labor" for several years before they were able to present their case at the United Nations, and indeed had initially had little success in their attempts to do so. In March 1947, the AFL's Free Trade Union Committee began its assault on slave labor with the publication of an article titled "Manifesto Against Slave Labor" in its *International Free Trade Union News*.[7] A few months later, at the October 1947 national convention of the AFL, David Dubinsky's International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) introduced a motion to call upon the United Nations to thoroughly examine the problem of international "slave labor."[8] According to the resolution, forced labor had "become a postwar institution in many lands constituting nearly one-third of their productive work." Although euphemistically called "corrective labor," the ILGWU argued that this "slave system" was being increasingly used as a "means of punishing political opponents and robbing them of their basic human rights."[9] The Garment Workers' resolution called upon the United Nations to undertake a "thorough-going survey of the extent of forced labor in all member nations of the UN."[10]

After the resolution was passed at the AFL's convention in November, the trade Federation began the detailed process required to present an issue to ECOSOC, submitting its initial request on November 24, 1947.[11] On February 2, 1948, the Agenda Committee approved the item and forced labor was added to the schedule of ECOSOC's Sixth Session. Other labor groups, such as the Workers Defense League (WDL), joined the call for an investigation of forced labor. The WDL, in a petition signed by notables such as the African American labor leader A. Philip Randolph, cited its battle against "lynchings of Negroes, against racial discrimination, against denial of workers rights, against totalitarian ideology" when explaining why they supported the campaign against forced labor. [12]

In that session, however, the Council postponed hearing the issue, angering the AFL because the items that the union considered of less importance were allowed to remain on the schedule. The US government declared the "high importance" that it placed on the topic, but then voted to delay. The AFL's Matthew Woll angrily protested to Secretary of State George Marshall: "This attitude is in sharp contrast to [the United States'] professed belief in the basic human rights."[13] Later, Jay Lovestone remembered, "The A.F. of L. initiated the entire slave labor business. Our own government was cold to the proposition."[14]

In March 1949, the AFL's UN representative Toni Sender was finally allowed to deliver a speech at ECOSOC's Eighth Session. Quoting from the Declaration of

Rights of Man, Abraham Lincoln, and the UN's own Human Rights Declaration, Sender assailed Soviet forced labor, providing example after example from oral testimony by survivors. Labor, she declared, is "constantly aware of the fact that the price of freedom is courage and permanent vigilance." In that context, she argued, the AFL could not stand by without campaigning against the evil of forced labor.[15] Sender's speech echoed the role labor played in remaining vigilant against labor abuses at home.

Over the next few years, however, the US government continued to offer only mixed support for the resolution. The reasons for the tepid response become clear in the State Department's position papers: although they attempted to "pin the blame" upon the USSR for the failure to proceed on the issue, American government officials were secretly concerned that by paying attention to concerns about forced labor, the Soviet Union would be provided an opportunity to highlight labor problems in the West. The British delegation in particular worried about having to respond to allegations of forced labor in their colonies. Even support by organizations such as the WDL, which highlighted the mistreatment of African Americans in their support of the "end of slave labor everywhere in the world," gave credence to the idea that US practices would also come under attack.[16] In the lead up to ECOSOC's Tenth Session, according to the American position paper, "If the resolution should be defeated, the defeat would involve not only a loss of prestige, but Communist propaganda would probably exploit it as [the] exoneration of USSR from widespread charges that the USSR exploits the forced labor of many millions of people. It is imperative that the U.S. take precautions to prevent any such result or to appear in any way to be retreating on the moral issue involved."[17]

At the Eleventh Session, however, in June 1950 (the same year that the United States failed at having the WFTU's agenda-setting rights revoked) the US position changed. Tactics of delay clearly were no longer working. Although the issue had been postponed from the Tenth Session to the Twelfth Session of the Council, in preparation for the Eleventh Session, the director of the International Labor Organization (ILO) requested that the subject of forced labor be raised at the Eleventh Session. This action occurred in part due to a motion by the AFL's representative in the ILO's Workers' Group, which suggested that the ILO take up an impartial inquiry into the nature and extent of forced labor, not precluding "the possibility of setting up joint machinery with the United Nations" should ECOSOC decide to also take up the issue.[18] This pressure coincided with several other forces, and resulted in the US delegation pushing for a UN investigation of slave labor. According to the position paper, "Aside from the compelling humanitarian reasons for the U.S. to seek to have an impartial forced labor inquiry made, there are also important economic and political reasons for doing so." One of the reasons listed was that American companies and producers were increasingly complaining to Congress that they were unable to compete with the inexpensive products that were the result of forced labor, and that this would intersect with the controversy over the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program and issues of free trade.[19] However, the first listed reason for taking up the campaign against forced labor at that time was the vigorous campaign being conducted by the AFL and the condemnation of forced labor by the ICFTU. These campaigns were being

increasingly publicized, and "Reports from missions abroad indicate that the issue of forced labor is one of the Soviet Union's sorest spots and that possibly some fellow travelers and near Communists can be won from their Communist sympathies on this very issue."[20]

Indeed, since March 1949, when the AFL had first raised the issue with the United Nations, the US labor union and its allies had been busy directing attention to the problem, often using government apparatuses to further their cause. By early 1949, for example, the Economic Cooperation Administration had distributed copies of the AFL report on Russian slave labor to all ECA missions in Europe. The missions were charged by the ECA to distribute the report to the labor press of Europe.[21] By September 1949, the State Department was mulling over the possibility of supporting a resolution at the United Nations' General Assembly calling for an investigation of forced labor: The "USSR is particularly sensitive to the accusations of forced labor. . . . Posing as it does as the champion of an allegedly oppressed proletariat, stories of huge Nazi-like concentration camps in the USSR have forced the Communist Party into an unconvincing defensive in many countries, such as France, where the contest for the support of workers is extremely keen. Hence those responsible for 'cold war' propaganda are eager to pursue discussion of the subject wherever opportunity exists."[22]

Finally, in late February 1950, the AFL presented its report against forced labor to the UN Special Committee on Slavery, and in the process made headlines across the nation.[23] The *New York Times* praised the AFL, indicating that because of the AFL report, the United Nations could no longer evade its responsibility for upholding human rights.[24] The Special Committee on Slavery, which had been investigating human bondage as practiced in the Middle East, Africa, and South America, found itself embroiled in a bitter Cold War battle.[25]

In preparation for ECOSOC's Twelfth Session, the US State Department sought to carefully shape the proposed ad-hoc Committee on Forced Labor. On the one hand, the diplomats clearly believed the Committee would be of great propaganda value in the course of the Cold War. On the other hand, it also opened up the United States and its allies for attack on their own labor practices. In a document that also addressed the make-up and funding for the Committee, the State Department tackled the scope of the Committee's task. For one, the Committee, in the eyes of the Americans concerned with the potential investigations of past American race slavery, should not investigate the history of forced labor at all, only the "problem at the present time," nor should it inquire too deeply into "every last vestige or isolated case of forced labor" (which might also provide opportunities for the USSR to attack the West). If compelled to provide a definition of forced labor (which they hoped to avoid), the US delegation was advised to support a definition that excluded "hard labor . . . done in the course of detention in consequence of a lawful order of a court," compulsory military service, disaster relief, or "any work or service which forms part of normal civic obligations."[26] These omissions were clearly designed to ward off potential attacks on Western labor practices.

Indeed, later that month, the UN Special Committee on Slavery heard a report that accused the United States of forced contract labor and the mistreatment of immigrant Mexican and West Indian laborers. The *New York Times* provided a

similar front-page treatment of those accusations as it had to those of the AFL against the Soviet Union.[27] This "objectivity" attracted the criticism of *Time* magazine's editors, who complained that the comparison of forced labor in the Soviet Union to the mistreatment of labor in the United States was like comparing apples to oranges. The editors quoted William Bohn in *The New Leader*, who wrote: "The Mexican wetbacks entered the United States illegally to work on farms and orchards. They swam the Rio Grande seeking this 'slavery.' But there is no record of anyone crossing any body of water to reach a Russian concentration camp. To pretend that the two evils are at all comparable is to perpetrate an enormous and dangerous falsehood."[28] But, nevertheless, and regardless of intent, publicity was directed to American labor practices, as well as Soviet, by the AFL campaign.

Finally, at the United Nations in 1951, ECOSOC voted 15–3 to undertake a two-year investigation of forced labor around the world. The Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia were the only countries that refused to approve the measure.[29] The United States immediately used the occasion as an opportunity to highlight the differences between its own system and that of the Soviet Union. When asked by the UN secretary-general if the United States would voluntarily participate in an investigation of any forced labor within its own borders, although it replied in the affirmative, the United States declared: "It is the belief of the Government of the United States that the Constitution, laws, and customs of this country, coupled with freedom of access to information, freedom of travel, and freedom of expression in the United States constitutes effective safeguards against the existence of forced labor."[30]

The Soviet Union, however, was hard-pressed to deny the AFL's accusations. The forced labor system in the Soviet Union had its roots in the prison systems of Imperial Russia, but bureaucracy, collectivization, industrialization, and Stalin's paranoid need for control had, by the Second World War, transformed the labor camps into what historian Michael Jakobson called "the vast scale of evil" or the GULAG Archipelago.[31]

As expected though, the Soviets quickly launched a counterattack, alleging that the United States, and not the Soviet Union, was guilty of forced labor crimes; the accusations included the mistreatment of illegal immigrants and of Native Americans.[32] Members of the US State Department were also sensitive to these claims, changing the term "slave labor" into "forced labor" in drafts of comment papers on the subject.[33] For Jay Lovestone and other labor leaders, however, the charges against the United States were nothing new, surprising, or even very upsetting.

> We didn't single out or even try to give the impress[ion] that Russia was the only country where such inhuman treatment of labor was in force. For one thing, we are not trying to give the impression that Russia is imperfect and that the rest is perfect. In order to fight the menace, we must have the sore spots wiped out or even the slightest manifestations of it anywhere else.[34]

On this occasion and others, the AFL found itself in the interesting position of being in agreement with the charges levied by its Communist enemies. One of the

difficulties (and opportunities) inherent to labor's support of the US government propaganda was the contradictions present back home. An analyst examining the influence of Soviet propaganda illustrated the point well: "The Soviet group constantly hammers away that America is making slaves of its workers both domestically and in the overseas operations of American corporations. This is, of course, absurd. Nevertheless, President Truman himself has stated that Taft-Hartley is a slave labor act."[35] As an indication of this concern, a large number of the slave labor articles published in the *New York Times* during this time focused not on Communist countries, but upon the domestic labor situation in the United States. The AFL's international campaign actually forced the US government to address those contradictions.

By 1951, the new ICFTU had replaced the AFL as free labor's representative to the United Nations (in opposition to the WFTU) and international standard-bearer for the antislave-labor cause.[36] But for the AFL, "slave labor" remained a rallying issue for the next decade. Evidence for their position included first-person affidavits, public Soviet documents, and smuggled-out classified materials.[37] The 1951 report published by the Free Trade Union Committee outlining the charges against the Soviet Union, *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, clearly illustrated Jay Lovestone's love for evidence and footnotes.[38] At the heart of *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, the FTUC reproduced a map of the Soviet Union, colored in pink, on which the Committee identified in dark pink swatches hundreds of forced labor camps under the federal GULAG system and under local control.[39] According to Lovestone in a meeting with CIA officials, the FTUC's "preparation and distribution" of this map assisted the US government and CIA handling of a "certain strategic emergency," which allowed the US delegate to the United Nations, Representative Armstrong, to effectively attack Gromyko at San Francisco.[40] Little evidence in the Hoover or Meany archives demonstrates exactly the nature of the partnership that resulted in the map, but certain surmises can be made. One scenario is that the CIA provided the AFL with additional funding for the collection of materials and for covering the costs of printing and distribution.

A second possibility, however, is that the CIA or some other branches of the US government provided the information, and the FTUC provided the voice. Whereas the FTUC certainly had the resources to collect some of the material published in *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, it may not have been able to muster the intelligence information necessary to put together the slave labor map in its entirety. At the same time, the US government could not single-handedly present the information at the United Nations without the appearance of strong bias and charges of fabrication. The solution, of course, was for the US government to provide the information to the AFL, for the FTUC to prepare and develop the map, and for the US government then to present the map as the handiwork of the AFL. The AFL, as an internationally respected labor organization, offered the map greater authenticity and authority for its intended audience than it would have had if presented solely as the work of the government.

Evidence to support the latter hypothesis can be found in a November 1951 "strictly confidential" memorandum from Toni Sender to J. H. Oldenbroek, president of the ICFTU. In the memo, Sender describes a meeting she attended

at the invitation of US State Department officials. According to the minutes, the purpose of the meeting was an "off-record discussion on the future handling of the Forced Labor problem." The State Department representatives informed the trade unionists that the government had "a considerable amount of material on the question." The primary goal for the November meeting, therefore, was to decide on "whom [*sic*] should present this material." The solution, of course, was to have the NGO organization, the ICFTU, present the government's material at the April 1952 session of the UN Ad-Hoc Committee on Forced Labor.[41]

Indeed, in the files of the State Department, there is considerable material suggesting an all-out push to collect material on accusations of forced labor behind the Iron Curtain. The relevant documents in the Decimal File of the Department of State are voluminous, and indicate efforts to compile first-person interviews with former prisoners, requests of embassies around the world to clip all newspaper articles of relevance. One memorandum reporting on the progress on the project, "Research on Forced Labor in the Soviet Union and Satellites," even suggested that the State Department was making use of Polish documents stored at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University to collect information about forced labor.[42]

The State Department also undertook to track reports of the reception of material produced by the labor organizations, such as the AFL's *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*.[43] For example, in a report from Uruguay, the Public Affairs officer wrote that an article written by Toni Sender was "headlined" in the October 31, 1950, edition of *El Sol*.[44] That December, the German Public Affairs officer reported that 70,000 copies of the AFL's UN report on slave labor (translated as "Sklavenarbeit in Russland") had been distributed in West Germany, and an additional 80,000 copies had been prepared for East Germany.[45] In other countries, such as Burma, labor attachés recommended as "most expedient and more effective" if the slave labor documents were sent directly from the AFL, and not from the US government.[46] Evidence of State Department material making its way into ICFTU documents appears in a memorandum accompanying copies of the ICFTU's "Stalin's Slave Camps." In that memo, the labor attaché to the US embassy in Belgium reported that portions of labor document's "State Plan for the Development of the National Economy of the USSR in 1941," were "made available to the ICFTU by the Department."[47]

The State Department and labor files highlight several important facts pertinent to the relationship between the labor organizations and the government. First, the US government remained extremely interested in presenting the forced labor material through an NGO rather than through its representative to the United Nations. The NGO represented an authoritative source respected by international observers. The ICFTU, even more so than the US national AFL, appealed to the government as a spokesman on forced labor because of its international membership and clout as a labor organization. Second, the government willingly provided its research services and intelligence material to the ICFTU in order to accomplish its own goals. Third, the ICFTU, through its AFL staff members, felt no qualms about accepting this aid or operating as a "front" for the US government. The ICFTU representatives at the UN saw the alliance as a harmonious pairing of two groups with common goals and possible solutions to each other's problems. Besides, the ICFTU benefited from the positive publicity and prestige resulting

from its leadership in the forced labor campaign. In no way did the ICFTU feel "used" by the US government (at least not on this issue.) [48]

If the government provided either the information or funding for the map, however, the Committee certainly put in a great deal of work during its construction. Lovestone enlisted Isaac Don Levine to create and print the map. In March 1951, Lovestone assured Levine that "the response to the map is very good."[49] In addition to putting the maps and associated pamphlets together, the FTUC also undertook the dissemination of the information, not only to private individuals, but also to groups and government offices. In August of that year, John Dunning, chief of the State Department's International Press and Publications Division, wrote to Lovestone thanking him for allowing the Division to use the map in its pamphlet, *Forced Labor in the Soviet Union*. The Division, Dunning continued, was "interested in exploring, at your earliest convenience, the possibility of giving this map worldwide distribution in areas other than those [in] which you have circulated it and to discuss what other uses could be made of the map by other media."[50]

In May 1953, after two years of research and review, the UN Ad-Hoc Committee on Forced Labor (made up of representatives from Norway, India, and Peru) released its report, a comprehensive 600-plus-page study, which analyzed legislation and judicial and penal practices of the 20 accused countries. The report validated the AFL's claims:

> [penal] legislation constitutes the basis of a system of forced labour employed as a means of political coercion or punishment for holding or expressing political views and it is evident from the many testimonies examined by the Committee that this legislation is in fact employed that way.[51]

The Soviet penal system, furthermore, "seems to play a part of some significance in the national economy." The Committee roundly condemned forced labor as a form of both political coercion and economic development, calling it "a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." In December 1953, and again in December 1954, the United Nations adopted resolutions reiterating its call for the abolition of all forced labor.[52]

The US State Department viewed the campaign against forced labor as a Cold War success. In a March 1954 position paper about the UN Ad-Hoc Committee, its author wrote, "From the U.S. point of view and from the point of view of world opinion, forced labor is one of the most important items that has been discussed by the UN. . . . This item has been one of the most effective propaganda items for the representatives of free world countries in the United Nations. It has brought into sharp focus the contrast in treatment of individuals and their rights in the free world and behind the Iron Curtain."[53] However, it also forced the United States to respond to specific allegations of forced labor within its own borders. The major points addressed by the State Department delegation to the United Nations included:

1. Forced labor is the very basis of capitalist economy.
2. The right of trade unions has been severely curtailed by the Taft Hartley Labor Relations Act of 1947.
3. The United States employed child labor (particularly in agriculture).

4. Racial discrimination in the fields of employment and wages deprives virtually a million Negroes of the right to choose their work.
5. Social Security in the U.S.A. means only unemployment and old-age security. A great number of workers are not covered by social security.
6. The principle of equal pay for equal work exists only in nine states and does not protect women.
7. The President's Federal Loyalty Order and the activities of Loyalty Boards amount to measures of political discrimination.
8. The United States exploits persons detained in mental clinics.
9. The United States exploits certain Indian tribes.
10. The United States arrests Negroes with a view to subjecting them to Forced Labor.
11. Mexican immigrant laborers were actually submitted to Forced Labor.
12. The United States allowed the war-time exploitation of the labor of foreigners (specifically the interned Japanese) and of conscientious objectors.
13. Convict labor amounts to forced labor.[54]

In a Position Paper responding to the Reports of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Forced Labor, the State Department tried to address these concerns with specific evidence refuting the points.[55] The AFL's initial campaign against Forced Labor, therefore, also forced the US government, however briefly, to respond on the world stage to allegations about inequality, injustice, and oppression within the United States.

Over the course of the next four or five years, those campaigning against slave labor rejoiced in what they saw as reform of the Soviet system. After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet Union's concentration camps decreased in population and harshness. The combined US government and AFL pressure at the United Nations continued,[56] however, and seemed to produce results. Bertram Wolfe, himself an ally of Jay Lovestone and the FTUC, reported in January 1956 that Soviet camps now provided prisoners with credits for each working day to be counted against their total imprisonment time, and allowed laborers to work only eight hours a day.[57] According to Wolfe, the reform resulted from a variety of factors, including pressure from the United Nations, a shortage of manpower, and strikes at the camps themselves.[58] He encouraged the United Nations and NGOs such as the ICFTU to continue their anti-forced labor activities, asking: "Has the second half of the twentieth century any more important business at hand than the liberation of these millions of rightless slaves?"[59]

After the Communist revolution in China and the resulting Civil War, the Free Trade Union Committee began including "Red China" in their attack on slave labor. For example, in a 1952 *New York Times* article, the AFL claimed that the Chinese not only forced prisoners into hard labor, but also that forced labor was "the common plight of all classes in Communist China, from prisoners to peasants and wage earners." As evidence for their attack, the AFL provided documentary material, which they claimed had been smuggled out of China. This evidence included vivid anecdotes, statistics, and details about Chinese

government programs, again evidence, perhaps, of the AFL's continued relationship with the US government.[60]

The Chinese response to the AFL's program against forced labor focused on defending their penal system while discrediting the US government and the American system. On November 30, 1954, the Chinese official newspaper *Jen Min Jih Pao* published a refutation of the ICFTU's accusations, arguing, "In China, work has become a matter of honor for every citizen who is able to work. As to those who are guilty of imperilling [*sic*] the interests of the State and the people, this country adopts a policy of reforming them through work and enabling them, in the course of their confinement, to form the habit of working, to learn productive techniques and raise their level of culture."[61] In the United States, meanwhile, the Chinese argued, "Monopoly capitalists force the other working people to engage in cheap, slave-like labor for their maximum profit."[62] Echoing American trade union leaders who condemned the Taft–Hartley Act, the Chinese pointed out, "The United States Government has enacted numerous acts suppressing the freedom of the workers and infringing upon the rights of trade unions."[63]

The AFL, and later the ICFTU, however, had in fact made a successful partnership with the very government criticized by trade unionists for limiting the rights of working people, and by doing so, highlighted many of labor's concerns at home as well as abroad. The AFL's campaign against slave labor continued to influence Cold War discourse over the next decades. In late 1955, for example, an organization that criticized Red China used AFL statistics to refute a *New York Times* article, which suggested that mainland Chinese were happy and content.[64] In 1974, dissident and author Alexander Solzhenitsyn praised the mid-twentieth–century AFL campaign against slave labor, specifically the slave labor map. Solzhenitsyn, who had been expelled from the Soviet Union after the publication in the West of *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918–1956*, regretted that he had not heard of the AFL's map prior to his expulsion: "This is a sign of the extent of the great disintegration and lack of information in the world: that I, who for so many years was concerned with the problems of Soviet slave labor camps, had no idea of the generous support for our sufferers on the part of the AFL and the publication by you of the Gulag map. (I tried to do it myself!)"[65]

The close participation between the AFL and the US government on the slave labor issue, however, appeared to have weakened as early as 1956. Only three years after the United Nations released a report criticizing Soviet slave labor, the US government initially failed to support a proposed treaty by the International Labor Organization to prohibit forced labor used for political or economic purposes. Although the US government opposed the treaty, the Soviet Union voiced its support, much to the shock of American labor officials. Philip Kaiser, a former assistant secretary of labor, complained in a letter to the *New York Times*: "We cannot afford at this time to yield our leadership in the campaign against slave labor." Citing *Times* correspondent Michael Hoffman, Kaiser continued, "If the United States does not in the end support a forced labor convention, while the Soviet Union and its satellites do, the circumstances would be generally regarded as a major Soviet triumph."[66] Over the course of the next year, numerous front-page

articles highlighted the elements of the US government that protested that slavery itself was a domestic issue, and that an international ban would interfere inappropriately in domestic governance. After much discussion with labor and employer representatives, the United States did in fact finally approve a reworded treaty in June 1956, indicating the significance the Americans continued to attribute to the slave labor issue.[67]

The last episode also highlights the continuing pressure the US government felt to balance its own domestic interests (and those of its allies), with the lofty Cold War ideals pushed by NGOs such as the AFL. The attention that the AFL and the ICFTU directed to forced labor in the Soviet Union also compelled the US government to defend, and in some cases reassess, its positions on domestic issues relating to labor, class, race, and gender.

Notes

1. *Slave Labor in the Soviet World* (New York: The Federation, c. 1951), 30. This paper builds upon the research initially completed for my book: *In the Interest of Democracy: The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance Between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011).
2. Edward L. Cushman to John G. Winant, June 6, 1946, RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, US Mission to the United Nations Central Subject Files, 1946–1964, Box 12: Labor to Palestine, Folder: NGO's: WFTU, 1946–1949, National Archives, College Park, MD (henceforth, NARA).
3. Adlai Stevenson called the debate "interminable." Memo regarding the World Federation of Trade Unions, Adlai Stevenson to Ambassador Dawson, December 5, 1946, RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, US Mission to the United Nations Central Subject Files, 1946–1964, Box 12: Labor to Palestine, Folder: NGO's: WFTU, 1946–1949, NARA.
4. Anne Winslow, *Toward Freedom from Want: Handbook on the United Nations Economic and Social Council and Specialized Agencies* (New York: Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, 1947), 36.
5. Memo regarding the World Federation of Trade Unions, Adlai Stevenson to Ambassador Dawson, December 5, 1946, RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, US Mission to the United Nations Central Subject Files, 1946–1964, Box 12: Labor to Palestine, Folder: NGO's: WFTU, 1946–49, NARA.
6. Toni Sender to J. H. Oldenbroek, April 7, 1950, George Meany Files, George Meany Memorial Archives (henceforth, GMMA), Box 52, Folder 13: "United Nations Cons. AFL ICFTU 1950–1952." Although Jay Lovestone was never directly attached to the AFL's delegation to the United Nations, he claimed in 1949 to have "prepared a good number of the basic documents which we presented to the U.N." His strongly anti-Communist mentality certainly influenced AFL activity at the United Nations. Jay Lovestone to David Dubinsky, January 5, 1949, Jay Lovestone Files (henceforth, JLF), GMMA, Box 33, Folder 6: "Dubinsky, David 1949."
7. Matthew Woll to George Meany, March 7, 1947, JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 19: "Free Trade Union Committee, 1946–1947."
8. Matthew Woll to George Marshall, March 2, 1948, JLF, GMMA, Box 46, Folder 21: "Labor League for Human Rights, 1948."
9. Resolution on the UN and Slave Labor, n.d., JLF, GMMA, Box 33, Folder 5: "Dubinsky, David 1947–1948."
10. Ibid.

11. "Speech by Toni Sender (AFL) before ECOSOC 8th Session, 3/2/49," RG 84, Box 12, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
12. "Statement to the United Nations on Forced Labor" Prepared by Workers Defense League, February 29, 1948, RG 84, Box 12, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
13. Matthew Woll to George Marshall, March 2, 1948, JLF, GMMA, Box 46, Folder 21: "Labor League for Human Rights, 1948."
14. Jay Lovestone to Norris Chipman, March 20, 1949, JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 11: "France: American Embassy, 1949–1950."
15. "Speech by Toni Sender (AFL) before ECOSOC 8th Session, 3/2/49," RG 84, Box 12, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
16. "Statement to the United Nations on Forced Labor" Prepared by Workers Defense League, February 29, 1948, RG 84, Box 12, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
17. "Economic and Social Council 10th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor," p. 2, RG 84, Box 32, Folder: "Economic and Social Council Tenth Session Position Book," NARA.
18. "Economic and Social Council 11th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor," p. 2, RG 84, Box 32, Folder: "Economic and Social Council Eleventh Session Position Book," NARA.
19. "Economic and Social Council 11th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor," p. 3–4, RG 84, Box 32, Folder: "Economic and Social Council Eleventh Session Position Book," NARA.
20. "Economic and Social Council 11th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor," p. 3, RG 84, Box 32, Folder: "Economic and Social Council Eleventh Session Position Book," NARA.
21. Harry Martin to David Dubinsky, March 18, 1949, JLF, GMMA, Box 33, Folder 33: "Economic Cooperation Administration, 1948–1949."
22. "Restricted Draft Memorandum, Forced Labor—Report of ECOSOC Action," [September 1949], RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, US Mission to the United Nations Central Subject Files, 1946–1964, Box 12: Labor to Palestine, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
23. "U.N. Hears That Soviet Bases Its Economy on Slave Labor," *New York Times,* February 28, 1950, 1.
24. "The U.N. and Slave Labor," *New York Times,* March 1, 1950, 26.
25. George Barrett, "U.S. Is Charged before U.N. with Tolerating Slave Labor," *New York Times* March 3, 1950, p. 1, clipped and sent to Jay Lovestone by Norris Chipman. See Jay Lovestone to Norris Chipman, March 20, 1950, JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 11: "France: American Embassy, 1949–1950."
26. "Economic and Social Council 12th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor," p. 4–6, RG 84, Box 33, Folder: "Economic and Social Council Twelfth Session Position Book," NARA.
27. George Barrett, "U.S. is Charged before U.N. of Tolerating Slave Labor," *New York Times* March 3, 1950, 1.
28. "United Nations: Objectivity," *Time* March 27, 1950.
29. *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, 5.
30. Annex C, "U.S. Reply" to UN Secretary General, appended to Acheson Memo regarding a potential interviewee about forced labor in the Soviet Union, State Department Decimal File (henceforth, SDDF), 1950–1954, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
31. Michael Jakobson, *Origins of the GULAG: The Soviet Prison Camp System, 1917–1934* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1993), 143.
32. George Barrett, "U.S. Is Charged before U.N. with Tolerating Slave Labor," *New York Times,* March 3, 1950, 1. Clipped by Norris Chipman and sent to Jay Lovestone. JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 11: "France: American Embassy, 1949–1950."

33. Wiesman to Schaetzel, September 9, 1949, attached to Restricted Draft Memorandum, Forced Labor—Report of ECOSOC Action," [September 1949], RG 84 Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, U.S. Mission to the United Nations Central Subject Files, 1946–1964, Box 12: Labor to Palestine, Folder: "Labor: Compulsory, 1948–1949," NARA.
34. Jay Lovestone to Norris Chipman, March 20, 1950, JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 11: "France, American Embassy, 1949–1950."
35. "The Propaganda Gap," n.d. (c. 1951), p. 14, George Meany Files, GMMA, Box 52, Folder 16: "Geographical Files: Europe—General, 1947–1960."
36. The ICFTU developed as a result of the efforts of the AFL and other anti-Communist unions from around the world to create an alternative global organization to the WFTU. It replaced the AFL at the United Nations because the new organization was perceived as a legitimate international labor group, instead of a national organization (like the AFL). Although initially a supporter and influential founder of the ICFTU, policy differences soon forced a rift between the AFL and the ICFTU. Although the names had changed at the United Nations, the staffing remained the same, and AFL representative Toni Sender continued to work for the ICFTU at the United Nations. Lovestone (in his characteristic cranky manner) later wrote that the AFL was "not unmindful of the fact that the only issue in the U.N. over which the I.C.F.T.U. got world-wide recognition [slave labor] is the one conceived, hatched, nursed and created by the A.F. of L. back in 1947—in the face of all sorts of and sundry opposition." Jay Lovestone to Irving Brown, April 4, 1951, Jay Lovestone Collection (henceforth, JLC), Hoover Institution Library and Archives (henceforth, Hoover), Box 283, Folder: "Office Files 1944–1966, 1951 Brown, Irving"; Irving Brown Files, GMMA, Box 29, Folder 11: "Lovestone, Jay 1951." Reference to the ICFTU addition as a consultative organization at the United Nations can be found in "Council NGO Committee Position Paper," January 23, 1950, RG 84, Box 32, Folder: "Economic and Social Council 10th Session Position Book."
37. See *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*.
38. Lovestone and the FTUC intended to present the material to as diverse an audience as possible. In these efforts, they presented to the Rockefeller Foundation a proposal to compile a book of evidence of Soviet slave labor, funded by the Foundation and released by the AFL. "There should somewhere be a compilation of all such material for the general public, students, teachers, etc.," Lovestone wrote to Joseph Willits, the director of the Rockefeller Foundation, "I do not know of a more befitting auspices than an American labor organization for such a publication." The FTUC's executive secretary assured Willits of the AFL's early efforts on behalf of the forced labor campaign, claiming that "more than twenty-five years ago, the A.F. of L. posed as a serious threat to international decency and social justice the spreading menace of slave labor in Russia." *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, 31. The Rockefeller Foundation had its own ties to the US government and CIA, and Lovestone knew it. In a letter to Willits on October 25, 1951, Lovestone wrote: "There are . . . a number of matters which make it extremely urgent that we should get together to go over them. They involve Washington and its relations to your Foundation in particular, and Foundations in general." Jay Lovestone to Joseph Willits, October 25, 1951, JLF, GMMA, Box 55, Folder 20: "Rockefeller Foundation, 1951–1954."
39. *Slave Labor in the Soviet World*, 16–17.
40. Top Secret Memorandum, n.d., JLC, Hoover, Box 714, Folder: "1950s–1958."
41. Toni Sender to J. H. Oldenbroek, November 15, 1951, JLF, GMMA, Box 58, Folder 11: "Sender, Toni 1951."
42. Glenn McClelland and James Clarke to Evans, "Present Status of Project 'Research on Forced Labor in the Soviet Union and Satellites,'" SDDF, 1950–1954, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
43. SDDF, 1950–1954, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.

44. Francis Herron to Department of State, "Reprint Magazine Article from the American Federationist Headlined by El Sol," SDDF, 1950–1954, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
45. W. J. Convery Egan to State Department, "Sklavenarbeit in Russland Pamphlet," SDDF, 1950–54, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
46. George W. Edman to Department of State, "Documented Map of Forced Labor Camps in Soviet Russia," SDDF, 1950–54, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
47. Eric Kocher to Department of State, "Transmittal of Documents," SDDF, 1950–1954, 861.064, Box 5157, RG 59, NARA.
48. On the other hand, the labor representatives saw the danger of revealing to the general public the relationship between the government and the unions. The Sender Memorandum described above was marked "personal and confidential." Similarly, Lovestone directed Phil Kaiser, Assistant Secretary of Labor, to remove two clauses from a proposal to develop a labor mission to the Far East. The offending clauses suggested first that the US government provide information to US workers in order to get their support for the US policy, and second, that the US labor movement provide the US government with suggestions "for reaching and influencing workers to support Western democracy and reject totalitarianism." Lovestone did not dispute the validity of these points, but wanted them removed for reasons of prudence and secrecy: "There is no telling to [*sic*] what evil hands confidential documents fall—particularly because they are marked confidential whether they are mimeographed or not." Jay Lovestone to Phil Kaiser, April 5, 1950, JLC, Hoover, Box 279, Folder: "Office Files 1944–1966, 1950 Department of Labor."
49. Jay Lovestone to Don Levine, March 21, 1951, JLF, GMMA, Box 46, Folder 2: "L: General Correspondence, 1951–1953."
50. John Dunning to Jay Lovestone, August 31, 1951, JLC, Hoover, Box 288, Folder: "Office Files 1944–1966, 1951 Department of State." Two years later, Levine sold Lovestone 11,000 more copies of the map at three cents each, and advised the Committee of an Argentinean organization that wished to receive 20,000 further copies of the map as a contribution from the FTUC. In 1952, *Voice of America* recorded a radio program of songs of the slave workers of the USSR, which was presented by the State Department on the *Voice*'s airwaves on May Day. The choir responsible for singing the songs was made up of Russian displaced persons and escapees from behind the Iron Curtain. "U.S. to Broadcast Slave Labor Songs," *New York Times,* April 27, 1952, 7. Arnold Beichman suggested to Matthew Woll that the Free Trade Union Committee put out a record album of these songs to accompany the Slave Labor Map to be "used effectively in the AFL's fight against Soviet slavery." Arnold Beichman to Matthew Woll, May 15, 1952, JLF, GMMA, Box 35, Folder 22: "Free Trade Union Committee, 1952."
51. Cited in US Department of State, "Report to Congress on Forced Labor in the U.S.S.R.," February 9, 1983, 21.
52. Cited in US Department of State, "Report to Congress on Forced Labor in the U.S.S.R.," February 9, 1983, 22–23.
53. Economic and Social Council 17th Session Position Paper: Forced Labor, RG 84, Box 35, Folder: "Economic and Social Council 17th Session Position Book."
54. Wording revised by author to enhance readability. Economic and Social Council 16th Session Position Paper: Reports of the Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labor, RG 84, Box 35, Folder: "Economic and Social Council 16th Session Position Book."
55. The response to the Social Security point, however, was merely: "The United States Government does not believe that the technical coverage of a nation's social security laws has any relevancy to the investigation of the Committee."
56. Minutes of the March 23, 1954, Operations Coordinating Board meeting on Eastern Europe, topics include EVROS River project, food project, slave labor reports (women and children), balloon project, documentary film on Baltic States, US Navy fleet visit

to Baltic Sea. Miscellaneous. WHITE HOUSE. SECRET. Issue Date: March 23, 1954. Date Declassified: May 28, 1992. Unsanitized. Incomplete. 5 page(s). Reproduced online in *Declassified Documents Reference System*. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale Group, 2003. Document Number: CK3100062222.

57. Bertram Wolfe, "Note on the Soviet Labor Reform of 1954–55," *Russian Review* 15 (1956), 58.
58. Ibid., 58–59.
59. Ibid., 59.
60. "Slave Labor Held Universal in China," *New York Times,* October 24, 1952, 2.
61. Translated article, "*Jen Min Jih Pao* Commentary Refutes United States 'Forced Labor' Slander," JLF, GMMA, Box 15, Folder 5: "China, 1954, 1956–1957."
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Marvin Liebman, Letter to the Editor, "Facts on China Cited," *New York Times,* December 6, 1955, 36.
65. "Solzhenitsyn Declines an Offer from A.F.L.-C.I.O. to Tour U.S.," *New York Times,* March 15, 1974, 12.
66. Philip M. Kaiser, Letter to the Editor, "To Outlaw Forced Labor," *New York Times,* February 19, 1956, E10.
67. Michael L. Hoffman, "Forced Work Ban Advanced in I.L.O.; Conferees in Geneva Agree on Principles for Pact to Outlaw Practice," *New York Times,* June 29, 1956, 4.

Chapter Three

Marred by Dissimulation: The AFL-CIO, the Women's Committee, and Transnational Labor Relations

Yevette Richards

When the Joint International Trade Secretariats/International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ITS/ICFTU) Consultative Committee for Women Workers was founded in 1957, representation from the AFL-CIO, the largest and wealthiest affiliate of the ICFTU, was a conspicuous absence. Nor was there a US representative on one of the several International Trade Secretariats belonging to the committee. By 1964, the Women's Committee, as it was coined, finally welcomed an AFL-CIO titular member, Ann O'Leary Sutter. However, Sutter attended only one meeting between her appointment and the AFL-CIO's withdrawal from the international in 1969. Reliance only on ICFTU records, which document Sutter's excuses for not attending meetings, could lead to the assumption that she could not sufficiently commit to the position. The AFL-CIO records, though, reveal that Federation leaders were behind the proffered excuses and that Sutter fervently wished to participate in the Women's Committee.

All of the decisions concerning the AFL-CIO's interactions with the Women's Committee appear to have been the prerogative of AFL-CIO president, George Meany, and the top officials in the Federation's International Affairs Department, Jay Lovestone, Michael Ross, Ernest Lee, and Virginia Tehas. In terms of their disposition and priorities and in the context of prevailing gender ideologies, these people were an unlikely set to champion working women's issues. Regarded as Western labor's preeminent Cold Warrior, Lovestone viewed nearly all struggles within the construct of anticommunism. Issues pertaining to women's equality did not intersect with anticommunism on a level that warranted his engagement.[1] It appears that the people who worked around Lovestone either agreed with his decisions or thought it better not to cross a man with a powerful intellect and who was prone to hurling caustic barbs. According to Lovestone's assistant, Irving Brown, Ross's compliant nature made him unwilling to stake a position on internal disputes.[2] At times, Lee seemed somewhat sympathetic to the AFL-CIO's participation on the Women's Committee; however, his position as Meany's son-in-law

and his military rather than trade union background perhaps predisposed him to follow the prevailing sentiment.[3] As Meany's longtime secretary and confidential assistant, Tehas wielded enormous power though not utilized in the direction of women's issues.

If the AFL-CIO was dismissive toward the Women's Committee, the other ICFTU national affiliates, with the notable exceptions of the German labor federation, *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund* (DGB), and Scandinavian federations, also were prone to discount the work of this advisory body. The pervasive stereotypes about gender roles combined with the lesser economic and social status of women meant that organized labor paid little attention to gender inequality and the need to implement policies directed toward women's full inclusion in the labor movement. In this context, the DGB's strong support of the Women's Committee is ironic considering the reputation of the German labor movement as a "workers' patriarchy."[4]

Women's Committee members often complained bitterly about the superficiality of ICFTU support. Its marginalization by the national union federation leaders on the ICFTU Executive Board points to organized labor's shortsightedness in recognizing the far-reaching implications of the changing gender demographic of workers. Economic restructuring beginning in the 1970s would bring that lesson home.[5]

Given the ICFTU's lack of strong commitment to gender equality in practice, this chapter seeks to decipher the reasons that the AFL-CIO both rejected involvement with the committee and sought to conceal its behavior from the ICFTU. Since none of the Federation leaders recorded an explicit reason for the rejection and the concealment, this chapter will examine the AFL-CIO's recalcitrance within an analytical framework that addresses the intersections of Cold War politics, contestations over gendered definitions of the laboring body, and relations between the AFL-CIO and the ICFTU.

Cold War Politics and the ICFTU's Internal Divisions

Since the 1949 founding of the ICFTU out of a Cold War schism within the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), its executive board members maintained an unstable alliance.[6] The rivalry between the then separate AFL and CIO, which continued after the two federations merged in 1955, became intertwined in the transnational struggles within the ICFTU over foreign policy direction and leadership.[7] CIO leaders Walter Reuther and James B. Carey joined with European ICFTU affiliates in opposing the independent work of Jay Lovestone's AFL-affiliated Free Trade Union Committee and later the AFL's strict anti-Communist positions. In turn, the AFL's Meany and Lovestone considered the ICFTU's policies inadequate in confronting both colonialism and communism.[8] Compromises were reached, which halted the independent work for a time in exchange for reorganization of the ICFTU Secretariat with the goal of speeding up organizational and educational efforts in less developed regions, particularly Africa.

The AFL-CIO, however, remained dissatisfied with the leadership of the ICFTU Secretariat, including how it conducted its organizational work and

management of the International Solidarity Fund (ISF), out of which regional educational activities and programs were financed. By the end of 1964, the AFL-CIO would again chart an independent course through the creation of the African American Labor Center (AALC). After an initial skirmish over whether Irving Brown's dual appointments with the AALC and the ICFTU contradicted the International's loyalty clause, the ICFTU accepted the AFL-CIO's new role.[9] Yet tensions flared again when Meany publicly castigated the ICFTU Secretariat for deducting ISF contributions for investment purposes instead of spending more funds on strengthening ICFTU programs and projects.[10]

By and large, the strongest disagreement between the AFL-CIO and ICFTU European affiliates involved violations of the policy of no contact with Communist unions.[11] The Meany and Lovestone leadership held the Germans primarily responsible for softening of the resolve regarding contacts, although the British came in for a fair level of criticism as well.[12] In 1956, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, with his support for "peaceful coexistence" and repudiation of Joseph Stalin's rule, provided the initial opening for Western Europe to engage in greater labor, trade, and commercial contacts with its Communist neighbors.[13] West Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) placed its rising political fortunes behind a new Eastern policy, change through rapprochement (*Ostpolitik*). With the goal of a united Germany, the SPD advocated normalizing relations with the Soviet Union, East Germany, and Poland.[14] As an ally of the SPD, the German labor federation supported the SPD's polices. Moreover, it had financial incentive to do so. The DGB owned large-scale commercial and business enterprises, which engaged in business transactions with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.[15]

The AFL-CIO's increasing alienation from the ICFTU, and German leadership in particular, may account in part for its resistance to involvement with the Women's Committee. The DGB strongly supported the committee, and Germans predominated among the membership. The spark that would lead to the AFL-CIO's withdrawal from the ICFTU, however, was the ICFTU's consideration of the UAW's separate membership application in 1969 following Reuther's withdrawal of the union from the AFL-CIO. Although the ICFTU eventually turned down the application, the AFL-CIO carried through on its decision to leave. Even when the Federation returned 13 years later, the differences still loomed large. The AFL-CIO considered the ICFTU too bureaucratic, too soft on communism, and too dominated by European interests.[16]

Beginning of the Women's Committee

Since World War II, the expanding role of women, and in particular married women, in employment made the male model of worker problematic.[17] To address the problems that this growing labor demographic faced, the ICFTU and the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) cosponsored the International Summer School for Women Workers in 1953 in France.[18] Recognizing that male trade unionists were suspicious that all female meetings could portend a weakening of unionism based on a normative male model, the ICFTU assured the affiliates that "It should be clearly understood that neither those who have made

the suggestions nor the ICFTU believe in a 'separate women's movement' within the trade unions."[19]

The AFL and CIO were expected to contribute participants. Michael Ross, who would become head of the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department from 1958 until his death in 1963, felt compelled to include in letters he wrote the two CIO participants the admonition that the CIO did "not advocate any universal solution for trade union or social problems that arise in the different countries."[20] This statement reflected the suspicions of European approaches and seemed designed to preempt the formation of any transnational gender solidarity that might arise and threaten the patriarchal norms of the national labor center. Available records do not reveal if the AFL sent participants; however, longtime labor activist Esther Peterson (who was living in Europe while her husband served in labor attaché positions with US embassies) attended the school as a teacher.

The course's participants, 53 women from 25 countries, called for the ICFTU to create a standing women's committee with the charge of formulating strategies for integrating and organizing women into labor unions and "bring[ing] to international opinion a greater awareness of the women workers' demands."[21] Four years passed before the labor internationals established the Women's Committee, initially with representation from five ICFTU and seven ITS affiliates.[22] The committee was charged with examining social and economic questions facing women, organizing women workers, and promoting education and leadership training projects.[23]

From its establishment, the Women's Committee constantly complained about the imposition of ICFTU rules that resulted in its remaining for many years a Northern European operation instead of the global organization that was its mandate. Only those affiliates that had women's committees and could pay their way to meetings were invited to join as titular members.[24] In a gesture toward the principle of worldwide representation, the ICFTU allowed for three corresponding members, representing the regions North America, Latin America, and Asia.[25]

The Limits of Corresponding Membership

The AFL-CIO's appointment of Nancy Pratt as a corresponding member is worth contrasting with the two representatives from the other regions who were active labor leaders. The Latin American representative Carmen Maria Araiza helped organize the National Congress of Working Women in coordination with the Mexican Trade Union Federation and the Federation of Working Women's Organizations.[26] The credentials of Asian representative Maniben Kara were impressive and long. She had served as a substitute member of the ICFTU Executive Board, and held multiple offices including vice president of Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), the Indian national center affiliate to the ICFTU, president of the Western Railway Employees Union, and president of the All-India Railway Federation.[27]

Pratt, by contrast, was a member of the AFL-CIO Research Department. Since the AFL-CIO considered this department as the proper domain for women's issues on the Federation level, it is logical in some sense that the appointment should

emanate from there. Moreover, Pratt herself was committed to women's issues, having lobbied inside the AFL-CIO for equal pay.[28] However, the placement of the corresponding membership within the Research Department functioned to keep the position purely bureaucratic in nature and thereby necessitated a low level of commitment. In fact, Ross indicated the AFL-CIO's lack of investment in the position by informing the ICFTU's assistant general-secretary Hans Gottfurcht that they appointed Pratt since the "position [was] purely one of corresponding from here." Underscoring the fleeting attention given to the position, he informed Tehas that Pratt "could do the job pro tem."[29]

The AFL-CIO could have chosen a high-profile woman active in one of its affiliates with high female membership and/or with a women's committee. A reason for not pursuing this option seems less to do with the possibility of stirring up persistent rivalries between the AFL and CIO leadership, and more to do with lack of concern for an active presence on the Women's Committee. The answers that Pratt filled out for an ICFTU questionnaire highlighted the AFL-CIO's lack of focus on women workers. She put "not applicable" beside questions about the methods and programs for enrolling more women, the access of women to developing trade union leadership, and the organizational initiatives in unorganized trades and professions.[30]

In 1959, Anne Draper, an economist on staff at the Research Department, replaced Pratt as regional corresponding member. Attention to a misunderstanding regarding her appointment lends further evidence for the low priority the AFL-CIO attached to the position. When Ross heard that well-known, highly respected UAW activist Caroline Davis, along with Araiza, would represent the ICFTU as a consultant for an International Labor Organization (ILO) meeting, he contacted Belgian Marcelle Dehareng who, through the ICFTU Secretariat, served as secretary of the Women's Committee. Ross opined that the AFL-CIO may have "been remiss" in finalizing a replacement but wondered how Davis was chosen as the corresponding member. After assuring Ross that the Women's Committee recognized Draper, who had written to them about her appointment, Dehareng explained that Davis had been a last-minute choice for a specific mission. In response, Ross stated that he had recalled talking with the Research Department about Draper as a replacement but had not known if anything further had been done. It is safe to assume from Ross's musings that he had not written an official appointment letter to the ICFTU Secretariat. A little over a month later, Draper did not join her fellow corresponding members in attending the third meeting of the Women's Committee, in which attention was paid to the sometimes benevolent but indifferent attitude of men toward efforts to include women in labor unions.[31] By late 1961, the ICFTU would make another concession to the Women's Committee, allowing it to increase its membership of corresponding members beyond the three regional representatives.[32]

Soon after this decision, Esther Peterson wrote Meany that she was "somewhat surprised to learn that there is still no [permanent] American woman trade unionist on the Women's Committee of the ICFTU." Dehareng had informed Peterson of this fact during a brief meeting between them following the completion of a session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Peterson's reaction indicates that

she believed that the AFL-CIO, despite not having a national women's committee, could and should have titular representation on the ICFTU advisory body. Her interest in this matter was more than passing. In addition to having attended the 1953 summer school, she also had participated in 1956 as an observer on the ICFTU preparatory committee that recommended the establishment of the Women's Committee. She now served as the highest-ranking woman in John F. Kennedy's administration as assistant secretary and the director of the Women's Bureau in the Department of Labor. She also was executive vice president for the recently created Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). In an effort to cajole and coax Meany, she pondered if "some conscious effort" might be made toward gaining a permanent seat on the committee, and solicitously pledged her support toward this end. The AFL-CIO's first female lobbyist and the person largely responsible for equal pay legislation ended with, "If there is any way that I can be helpful with this question, I would appreciate your telling me. I do hope we can have women's participation in the future in all international affairs, especially trade union matters."[33] It is not readily discernible if Meany replied.

However, a year later, Meany showed some consideration for the Women's Committee by assenting to the request of AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer William Schnitzler, fresh from an ICFTU meeting, to allow Draper to attend the Eighth Meeting of the Women's Committee scheduled to take place in Vienna in the spring of 1963. Schnitzler had deemed the AFL-CIO presence worthwhile for this special meeting, which was charged with discussing an international program of organization, with particular attention paid to the issues of women in developing countries.[34] He might have been more favorably disposed to advocate for Draper's participation in light of an upbraid he had earlier received from Herbert A. Tulatz, who was from Germany and served as the ICFTU's assistant general-secretary for the Education, Women's and Youth Department. Apprised by Dehareng of her meeting with Peterson, Tulatz learned that Schnitzler had been appointed to the PCSW. He noted:

> You are no doubt aware of the existence of the ICFTU/ITS Women's Committee . . . The Committee has often deplored its lack of information on the problems of women workers in the United States and particularly on the solutions that trade unions have found, or proposed, to meet them. This knowledge would be invaluable to us for formulating polices, giving examples in less advanced countries, or making comparisons in methods, etc.

After providing Schnitzler with a synopsis of the committee's work in studying women's issues and developing education programs in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, Tulatz urged Schnitzler in his work with the US commission not to limit himself to a national framework but to lend his experience to the Women's Committee, "which has devoted itself to the promotion of women everywhere."[35]

Later dubbed the Second World Conference on Women Workers' Problems, the eighth meeting expanded beyond the European membership base to include corresponding members and observers from throughout the world, 62 women from 27 countries in all.[36] The conference would draft the Vienna Statement, a

document that assessed the issues facing working women and called for an international program to address them. After the conference, about 40 of the delegates from 20 countries participated in the World Seminar on Women Workers' Problems, sponsored by the DGB in one of its modern schools at Gmund am Tegernsee. These delegates helped to draft the international program, with the topics of women as citizens, family members, workers, and trade unionists.[37]

Ernest Lee, assistant director of the International Affairs Department under Lovestone's leadership, understood that Draper would not attend the second DGB-sponsored seminar. Someone had scribbled "no" by the seminar information on the official ICFTU letter inviting Draper. However, he felt compelled to double check on Draper's approval to attend the eighth meeting by asking Virginia Tehas if there was a firm approval.[38] Having known about the planned meetings for some months, Draper expressed pleasure when she finally received permission to attend the Vienna meeting.[39] The official excuse for her nonattendance at the seminar was "demands on time."[40] Not acknowledging the DGB seminar's collaborative purpose, Lee intimated that Draper's attendance was unnecessary since someone could read her paper.[41]

In preparation for putting the Women's Committee work on the agenda of its upcoming Executive Board meeting, the ICFTU asked its affiliates to comment on the Vienna Statement. Meany's letter to ICFTU general-secretary Omer Becu reads as a ringing endorsement of the program in contradistinction to the general indifference to the Women's Committee found inside the International Affairs Department. Meany not only praised the work of the Women's Committee but also advocated for its expansion. Moreover, the letter also celebrated the recent passage of the federal equal pay law for women, which was mandated to take effect in a year, and the work of labor women on the PCSW.[42]

Understanding the reason for the contradiction between the behind-the-scenes neglect of the Women's Committee and the favorable official pronouncements further points to the low priority that AFL-CIO officials gave the Women's Committee. Simply passing the ICFTU request on to the "corresponding member," AFL-CIO officials did not seem to recognize that they were asking Draper to comment on the very document that she had helped to craft at the Vienna meeting. She informed them of this fact and then suggested the language for a letter that could be sent to Becu.[43] They used the language verbatim in the letter, which bore Meany's signature, and thus dispatched with the issue. The Women's Committee later used this language in their report on affiliates' responses – particularly "Meany's" call for the extension of the Women's Committee's work—to demonstrate the strength of support they had from the AFL-CIO.[44]

The AFL-CIO Gains a Permanent Seat

Perhaps this wording may have put the AFL-CIO in the position of accepting the late 1963 invitation to join the Women's Committee as a titular member.[45] The federation chose Ann O'Leary Sutter, who was married to an engineer and raising two sons, ages 16 and 10. She seems a curious choice given that she was retired from labor movement activism and was then working as an interior

decorator and licensed real estate broker.[46] It does not appear that more high-profile women activists were considered, particularly those involved with women's committees or with the sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, such as Caroline Davis and Lillian Hatcher, Dorothy Haener of the UAW, Clara Allen of the Communications Workers of America, Bessie Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, and Pauline Newman of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Maida Springer, an international representative of the AFL-CIO, was similarly overlooked.

Although Sutter's activism is essentially absent from labor history, her work was not insignificant. She had had extensive labor, social, welfare, and community service experience and had worked on numerous civic committees concerned with problems of women workers. She had served as a business representative and financial secretary for the Master Furniture Guild, Local 1285 of the Retail Clerks International Association (RCIA). During World War II, she served as the women's consultant for a regional office of War Production Board, covering five western states, and was a labor liaison officer for the Office of Price Administration.[47] Upon retirement, she retained her membership in RCIA, Local 648, the furniture division.

Sutter's appointment met with great acclaim. It was announced in *Women's News*, the Women's Committee newsletter.[48] Esther Peterson wrote Meany that she was "so pleased" with Sutter's appointment. "This is an important committee and I'm sure Mrs. Sutter will be a good representative for American trade unions and women workers."[49] After attending her first meeting in May 1964, Sutter brought back two greetings, one from Women's Committee chair Sigrid Ekendahl of Sweden sending regards to Peterson, and the other from Tulatz expressing happiness to the AFL-CIO officials for their appointment of a permanent delegate.[50] Despite the big send-off, Sutter never attended another meeting of the committee during her four-year stint. The records of the AFL-CIO International Affairs Department reveal that the AFL-CIO slowly stymied and crushed her activism.

Sutter's report of the 1964 meeting demonstrates what soon became clashing ideals: Her enthusiasm for her new position versus her unwavering loyalty to the AFL-CIO. Although she got along well with her colleagues on the committee, she was willing to give a behind-the-scenes report of politics and conflicts. Sutter noted that in a brief discussion of communism in Belgium, Women's Committee members attributed the Communists' strength to the weakness of the non-Communist opposition. She also reported on tensions between the British and the other Europeans, which meeting minutes do not reveal. Invited to dinner with Dehareng, Ekendahl, and Nel Tegelaar of the Netherlands, she learned that "The reason for the cold attitude" of Hilda Unsworth and Marie Patterson "toward the European delegates was based on the fact that Great Britain is not in the Common Market." (Neither was Ekendahl's Sweden.)[51] Lovestone apparently was not intrigued enough by the tidbits about communism and divisions among European ICFTU affiliates and their respective countries—at least not from the angle of disempowered female—to support Sutter's continued participation on the committee. The AFL-CIO's officials also might not have appreciated Sutter's attempts, although tepid, to influence AFL-CIO policy in a way that she believed would uplift the

Federation's prestige and her standing on the committee. Sutter reported that the Women's Committee members were disturbed that funding had been pulled from their activities for Africa. She noted that "veiled hints were made that President Meany could restore allocations for Africa, Asia, and Poland if convinced of the importance."[52] Although Sutter remarked that she had stayed quiet during the discussions on this issue because she did not know the facts, she gave officials two reasons why they should restore the funds: It could increase her effectiveness at the next meeting, and the work of the Women's Committee was of the "utmost importance"—especially in the developing world—and because women are involved with the training of children.[53] Sutter probably received greater insight into the struggles of women in developing countries from the two African women present at the meeting as observers: Nigerian labor activist Beatrice Simpson, who was also a mother to 10 children, and Elizabeth Stanley Muturi, who was the coordinator of women's activities for the Kenya Federation of Labor.[54]

As chair of the ICFTU's International Solidarity Fund (of which the AFL-CIO was the largest contributor), Meany concurred with other subcommittee members on the need for budget cuts. However, he often prioritized funding for programs supporting African male workers. At an ISF meeting a month following the Women's Committee meeting, he questioned why Africa needed the largest proposed cuts. Meany did not register nearly the same level of concern for Africa's women workers. In this regard, he asked skeptically if a previous $14,000 allocation had been worth spending on women.[55]

The eleventh meeting was about drafting the report for the workers' delegation for the upcoming 48th ILO Conference, which had "Women Workers in a Changing World" on the agenda. In addition, the Women's Committee discussed maternity protection, night work, unhealthy employment conditions, and mechanisms for oversight of equal pay implementation. After returning to the United States, Sutter immediately began to prepare for the twelfth meeting, which would cover techniques for organizing women and women's committees. Having learned from Mary Cannon, chief of the International Division of the Women's Bureau, that there were 26 US labor unions with women's committees, she asked Draper for any additional information on their organization.[56]

As the time approached for the meeting, Meany wrote Becu that "unforeseen circumstances" prevented Sutter from attending. However, he assured the ICFTU president that she would attend subsequent meetings, and that she and the AFL-CIO looked forward to receiving any reports emanating from the meeting so they could remain informed of events.[57] Sutter marked her despondency without giving clues as to why she did not go. She wrote Ernie Lee, "I was disappointed about the November meeting and am looking forward to receiving the minutes."[58]

After Dehareng informed Sutter in late January of the first meeting date for 1965, Sutter wrote a letter to Lee, which makes it clear that the "unforeseen circumstances" preventing her attendance at the previous meeting were not hers. She remarked, "I do hope that circumstances are now favorable and that President Meany will deem it wise to have representation at the next meeting."[59] Lee then wrote Tehas, informing her that after Sutter's appointment to the Women's Committee, it was decided not to send her to every meeting, but perhaps to every other one or

at least once a year. Since these calculations would allow her to attend this meeting, Lee seemed amenable, but added, "Unless there are other considerations, we should be able to send her to the next meeting. Please advise." In response, an unknown person handwrote on his note, "agree—I think every other year is sufficient." This decision invalidated the previous understanding that Sutter would attend one of the biannual meetings.[60]

In denying her request, Lee informed Sutter for the first time about the decisions regarding how often she could attend meetings, and he dismissed the upcoming meeting as accomplishing nothing new. The agenda focused on planning for the 1965 ICFTU Congress, the first to address women's issues. The committee had produced two documents for adoption consideration by the congress, "The Free Trade Unions and Women Workers" and the "Charter of Rights of Working Women." Lee continued, "After conferring here we note that the next meeting will simply rubber-stamp a document which was submitted and approved by the [Women's] Committee to the ICFTU Executive Committee Meeting on the 16th of March: therefore we feel it is desirable that you attend the meeting following the ICFTU congress in July where new matters will be undertaken based on the program to be proposed at the July Congress." His response provided no indication that these were historic documents important for the organization of the fastest-growing group of workers, women. Still he tried to mollify her: "This is not downgrading our opinion of the Women's Committee but it is an attempt to reduce expenses for meetings which are not initiating any new projects."[61] For the first time, expenses surfaced as the issue. Her first meeting cost $540.00, partly because she lived in California and had to fly to the East Coast first.[62] Ironically, the ICFTU denied membership to women in developing countries because of doubts that their labor organizations could support the expense while their wealthiest affiliate cited the expense as a barrier to attendance.

Sutter acquiesced to the gentle rebuff, but informed Lee that in October, the second meeting of 1965 would discuss part-time work. Labor men were traditionally scornful of the part-time sector, a traditional receptacle for women who had to balance both paid labor and unpaid reproductive work. Instead of approaching the subject of how family responsibilities contributed to women's lesser economic status, they viewed part-time workers as competitors who were not interested in or worthy of labor organization. However, some labor movements were beginning to study part-time work and how it exploited women workers. ILO conferences also had recently paid special attention to this subject. Sutter stressed its importance, noting that the number of women who had to choose this option was rapidly increasing due to their dual roles. Asserting that, "[w]omen should have a voice in regulations that bind them," she concluded, "It is my sincere hope that I will be permitted to attend this meeting."[63]

Sutter did not even broach the possibility of attending the ICFTU Congress even though most permanent members of the Women's Committee were planning to attend and speak in favor of the documents they had worked hard to research and put together into a cohesive global program. But Lee seemed sympathetic to Sutter's desire to go to the Women's Committee meeting following the congress. After Lovestone told Lee he should check with Meany's office because of the expense, he

wrote Tehas, giving her the history of decisions regarding Sutter's participation. In her favor, he spoke about how she took her responsibilities seriously and did excellent work on the documentation that the International Affairs Department sent to her. However, he undermined his support by providing an opening for a negative decision. "I feel that she should attend to keep her hand in and to keep us informed; yet, if the expense problem is great, I can advise her with an appropriate opinion that it should be again declined."[64]

The next day, Lee wrote Sutter to inform her that she could not go because Lovestone and Meany's office said the expenses were too great. As a further excuse, he added that the ICFTU congress has just thoroughly treated the Women's Committee issues. This was a duplicitous excuse, however, since Sutter was told that the committee meeting before the congress would not be discussing anything new, so she should wait to attend the meeting after the congress when a new item would be undertaken. Now their excuse morphed into the explanation that enough attention had recently been given to the committee's work. To add insult to injury, Lee placed the burden on Sutter to come up with the proper face-saving excuse. He hoped that she would give the "appropriate reasons" for not coming to the committee to the ICFTU and to "Miss Tada," a corresponding member from Japan. Sutter had used the possibility of Toyoko Tada's presence at the meeting as an observer as a way to encourage a positive response from the AFL-CIO. Sutter had recently hosted Tada along with other members of *Zensen Domei* (the Japanese Federation of Textile Workers' Union) who were visiting the United States on a government-sponsored program. Lee reassured Sutter again that the AFL-CIO was interested in the Women's Committee and that this non-approval did not mean she would not go in the future.[65]

Clearly, Sutter had an interest in upholding her reputation and that of the AFL-CIO before her Women's Committee colleagues, at least in part to stay in the good graces of AFL-CIO officials who ultimately decided whether she could attend. She responded to Lee that she knew Meany's office and Lovestone had a "sound reason for their decision," and she said she was encouraged by Lee's statement of interest in the Women's Committee. Still, Sutter could not hide her disappointment. She ended her letter by using a strategy of solicitousness mixed with a challenge, similar to Peterson's approach when encouraging the AFL-CIO to have a permanent member. "I will maintain my hope that the AFL-CIO will be the leader in recognizing the needs of our vast number of women workers with dual responsibilities." Enclosed with her letter were notes to Dehareng and Tada telling them that she could not attend "for reasons beyond my control." She added that Lee should please feel free to edit the letters as he deemed fit.[66] While Lee did not change her letters to the two women, the letter that was sent to Becu under Meany's signature substitutes "for reasons beyond my control" to "sincerely regret" with the added nebulous "unforeseen circumstances."[67]

With Sutter having missed three meetings in a row, Dehareng wrote her regarding the fifteenth meeting of the Women's Committee set for May 1966: "I am relying on your attendance, and in the meantime send you fraternal greetings."[68] This time the question of Sutter's attending was treated rather perfunctorily, with Lee making no attempt to engage in subtle pleading on her behalf. In response to

Lee's question if Lovestone authorized Sutter to attend, Lovestone handwrote and underlined the word "NO."[69]

Lee then informed Sutter that Lovestone stated that it was better that she did not attend and informed her that after the ICFTU Executive Board meeting in late June the AFL-CIO would "decide on further participation on the Committee." He added that she "probably desires" to write to Dehareng to inform her that she cannot attend, but looks forward to the fall session.[70] Even though they were hinting at pulling out of the committee, they asked Sutter to be duplicitous in her response to Dehareng. Sutter followed their direction and wrote that she "deeply regret[ed]" that she could not attend because of a conflict with her son's graduation, but she looked forward to attending the fall session.[71] She also wrote Lee, telling him that she sincerely hoped that the existing problems would be resolved and that further participation would be possible.[72]

Lee simply replied that her letter to Dehareng was fine and he sent best wishes to her son who was preparing to enter the Marianist Novitiate, which he called a wonderful order. It is ironic that while Lee celebrated her son's joining of a religious order dedicated to working on issues of poverty and ignorance, he asked Sutter to engage in subterfuge about her participation in a committee that put the problems of women in developing countries at the center of their programmatic endeavors. In the Women's Committee minutes, Sutter's name remained a mainstay on the "Apologies for absence" list.[73]

As the two-and-a-half year mark passed of Sutter not attending committee meetings, she appealed directly to Meany, "As the titular delegate of the AFL-CIO, I was privileged to attend the 11th meeting of the Committee in May 1964 at Brussels. I was most impressed by the worthwhile discussions and recommended programs which developed at the meetings." The subject of equal pay is vital to all workers, she added. "I am very interested in the work of the Women's Committee and would be available to attend. I would greatly appreciate your favorable consideration." Meany responded that he "can't justify the expense."[74] Yet during the same period in which Sutter made her numerous requests, Meany could justify the expense of taking Virginia Tehas with him to two ICFTU meetings.[75] Meany also disputed the meeting's importance, since the AFL-CIO already had a position on "Equal Pay" and had made it known to the Women's Committee. It is worth wondering if Meany and the AFL-CIO also resented that the DGB was sponsoring this meeting in Germany. He added the contradictory statement that the AFL-CIO valued her interest and participation, but "it will not be possible to send a representative to many of their meetings."[76] So the AFL-CIO had changed the criteria for attending Women's Committee meetings from once a year, to once every other year, to the nebulous number of not very many. To Meany and the Federation's leadership, the committee was pointless. The minutes of the sixteenth and seventeenth committee meetings from November 1966 and October 1967 do not record Sutter's name under "Apologies for absence," suggesting that no one at the AFL-CIO answered the requests for Sutter to attend.[77]

When Sutter asked to attend the next meeting, the first of 1968, her request was declined on the basis of the high cost for only one day. Judging from past excuses, if the meeting had been for two days or more, the AFL-CIO would have said that

the length made the attendance too expensive. Lee then told Sutter to express her regrets to the new ICFTU general-secretary, Harm Buiter, with a copy to the AFL-CIO. The union's leadership did not like Buiter and had tried to undermine whatever support he had among the Executive Board members. Now they did not give him the courtesy of a direct letter from Meany as an Executive Board member, as had been the practice. Dutifully, Sutter put up the front to Buiter, informing him that she would be in Hawaii for a long-planned vacation, and that it was therefore impossible for her to change her plane and reservations. Uncomfortable with her role in this deception, she wrote Lee, "Frankly, I wish my 'excuse' were fact rather than fiction. My son, Bro. Carl, is in Honolulu at the Marianist Scholasticate."[78]

Sutter continued to engage with the AFL-CIO, hoping that Meany would "favorably consider my attending" the Third World Conference on Women Workers' Problems scheduled for later in 1968.[79] Sutter did not attend the conference. Her correspondence with the AFL-CIO on the issue of the Women's Committee seems to have ceased with this letter. Sutter's desire to work with the Women's Committee conflicted with the AFL-CIO's increasing alienation from the ICFTU.

The Aftermath of the AFL-CIO's Disaffiliation from the ICFTU

What remains unclear about the engagement of the AFL-CIO with the Women's Committee are the reasons the Federation leaders went to such lengths to avoid any commitment to it and to disguise their nonsupport, particularly since affiliate leaders, with a few exceptions, ignored the work of the Women's Committee almost to the same extent that the AFL-CIO did. Perhaps the AFL-CIO did not want to cede the moral high ground to the Germans on this issue of women's labor rights, an issue that in principle all ICFTU affiliates held as valuable. Equally plausible, the AFL-CIO did not want its Communist rival, the WFTU, to have hard evidence of the Federation's lack of commitment to working women, which could be used as propaganda against the West. With significant energy and resources expended in Cold War struggles, the ICFTU affiliates largely thought of the woman issue as a pawn in these battles. In a competitive game, the two global labor bodies tended to act synchronically in raising issues of gender equality, either by sponsoring conferences or by approving resolutions favorable to women workers. Women-related policies were for show, not for change.

The AFL-CIO also may have wanted to avoid incurring the ire of US labor women on this issue. After all, at this same time, women activists in labor and the feminist movements were flexing their political muscle by using Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to overturn long-held assumptions about women's place in the labor market.[80] Yet there is the incongruity. The AFL-CIO's official positions on women's right to engage in wage labor and to equal opportunity within the framework of protective legislation were resolute. The Federation voiced support for Title VII, equal opportunity, maternity leave, and women's full participation in labor unions. With 1965 figures showing that only three million of 26.6 million women workers were organized in the United States, the AFL-CIO adopted a policy resolution that labor unions should make more of an effort to bring more women into unions, especially in the "lowest paid occupations and industries."[81]

Indeed, the Federation's self-interest should have dictated that it move toward bringing in this large unorganized pool of women workers, who represented well over one-third of all US workers. However, the AFL-CIO did not have any mechanisms or programs on the national level for the implementation of policies addressing women's lesser status in work, or the factors inhibiting their organization and participation in labor unions, the Women's Committee's principal subjects of concern. According to an ICFTU report filled out by 29 affiliates in 1967, despite women making up 20 percent of its membership, the AFL-CIO, along with labor centers in Brazil and Colombia, had no women on its Executive Boards. As further evidence of the AFL-CIO's unpreparedness for garnering the potential power of working women to the labor movement, the Federation could not report on how many, if any, women served on the Executive Boards of its affiliated unions—although it knew that some occasionally did. Also along with Brazil's and Colombia's labor centers, the AFL-CIO had no apparatus for dealing with women workers' issues, and it was counted as one of the labor centers in the six countries that did not have women's committees.[82]

Given the AFL-CIO's poor record of attention to women workers, the Federation's failure to support the Women's Committee cannot be attributed solely to internal rivalries within the ICFTU. At its root, the AFL-CIO's early dismissiveness of the Women's Committee stemmed from its failure to see the laboring body as anything but male. In 1974, US labor women started a movement to pressure the AFL-CIO to be inclusive of gender by forming the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). In 1980, Joyce D. Miller, head of CLUW and a vice president of the Amalgamated and Clothing Textile Workers, became the first woman on the AFL-CIO Executive Council. In 1982, following the AFL-CIO's return to the ICFTU, she became the Federation's representative to the Women's Committee.[83] With pressure from its women members, the AFL-CIO, belatedly, began to adapt its strategies to the economic changes brought about by global restructuring and the feminization of labor. The Federation has joined labor organizations globally in the recognition that labor's survival rests in large part on the recruitment and full inclusion of women workers. The policies that the Women's Committee fought so hard to implement are now mainstream ideals and on the top agendas of many labor organizations.

Notes

1. Lovestone's anti-Communist fervor was a factor in the building of a strong personal and professional bond with CIA counterintelligence chief, James Jesus Angleton. Other labor officials in international affairs also had working relationships with the CIA that at times were contentious. Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998). Michael Howard Holzman, *James Jesus Angleton, The CIA, and The Craft of Counterintelligence* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008). Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011).
2. John Boughton, "From Comintern to the Council on Foreign Relations: The Ideological Journey of Michael Ross," *Labor History* 48 (2007): 64.

3. See David Brombart's remarks about Lovestone and Lee in Don Kienzle, "Interview with David Brombart, Feb. 12 and 20, 1998," The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Library of Congress, accessed August 26, 2011, memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/index.html.
4. Sigrid Koch-Baumgarten, "Changing Gender Relations in German Trade Unions: From 'Workers' Patriarchy' to Gender Democracy?" in *Gender, Diversity and Trade Unions*, eds., Sue Ledwith and Fiona Colgan (New York: Routledge, 2002).
5. For an account of the frustration of the Women's Committee with the ICFTU, see Yevette Richards, "Labor's Gendered Misstep: The Women's Committee and African Women Workers, 1957–1968," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 44 (2011–2012).
6. Anthony Carew, "The Schism within the World Federation of Trade Unions: Government and Trade-Union Diplomacy," *International Review of Social History* 29 (1984); and Carew, "Conflict within the ICFTU: Anti-Communism and Anti-Colonialism in the 1950s," *International Review of Social History* 41 (1996).
7. John Herling, "Meany—Reuther Rift?", *Washington Daily News,* February 12, 1957, AFL-CIO Reel 1, ICFTU Archives, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam (henceforth, IISH); Gary K. Busch, *The Political Role of International Trade Unions* (New York: St. Martin's, 1983), 184–185.
8. For an account of European paternalism toward African trade unionists, see Yevette Richards, *Conversations with Maida Springer, A Personal History of Labor, Race, and International Relations* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004).
9. 36EB/11/(a), March 15–17, 1965, 4/11, Executive Board (henceforth, EB), 1965, in RG 18–007: International Affairs Department (henceforth, IAD), International Labor Organization Records, 1946–1985, George Meany Memorial Archive, Silver Spring, MD (henceforth, GMMA).
10. *John Herling's Labor Letter*, March 6, 1965, 4/11, EB, 1965.
11. John Windmuller, "The Foreign Policy Conflict in American Labor," *Political Science Quarterly* 82 (1967).
12. 40EB/17, June 28–30, 1966, 4/15 EB in RG18–007: IAD, International Labor Organizations Records, 1946–1985, GMMA. Jay Lovestone, Report on ICFTU EB Meeting, October 4, 5, 6, 1967, Brussels, Belgium, October 12, 1967, and Joseph A. Beirne for George Meany, Report—Brussels October 4–6, 1967, both in 4/21, GMMA.
13. Busch, 182.
14. Adolph Sturmthal, *Left of Center: European Labor since World War II* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1983), 65, 227.
15. Busch, 186–187.
16. Kienzle, Interview with David Brombart.
17. Norbert C. Soldon, ed., *The World of Women's Trade Unionism: Comparative Historical Essays* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985).
18. Hans Gottfurcht to Michael Ross, May 15, 1953, 9/2, GMMA.
19. Agenda Item 9, International Summer School, 1953, ICFTU Emergency Committee, Brussels, March 9–12, 1953, confidential, not for publication, 9/2, GMMA.
20. The two CIO participants were Gwendolyn DeRoche of the Communication Workers of America and Sara Fredgant, the education director of the Philadelphia Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. Ross to DeRoche, and Ross to Fredgant, both May 18, 1953, 9/2, GMMA.
21. Quote from Sigrid Ekendahl's Speech, ICFTU 8th World Congress, Amsterdam, July 7–15, 1965, Women's News, #4, July 1965, Box 6, 5010, ICFTU Records, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library (henceforth, Kheel); see also the ICFTU and Women Workers, 4–5, Box 2408 (b) WC

1966, 1797, and 14EB/15, May 16–18, 1955, 2407(a) (9), WC 1955–1958, 1623: both in IISH.

22. The ICFTU members included representatives from the national labor federations of Austria, France, Great Britain, Sweden, and Germany. The ITS members came from trade internationals with large female membership: International Union of Food and Drink Workers, International Federation of Industrial Organizations and General Workers' Union, International Federation of Free Teachers, International Graphical Federation, International Textile and Garment Workers' Federation, International Federation of Unions of Employees in Public and Civil Services, International Federation of Commercial, Clerical and Technical Employees.
23. 33EB/13 (revised), March 11–14, 1963, 3/19, GMMA.
24. See Yevette Richards, "Labor's Gendered Misstep."
25. The ICFTU and Women Workers, IISH. African representation on a corresponding basis was delayed and disrupted due to the Cold War and pan-African splits that impeded an effective formation of an African Regional Organization to the ICFTU.
26. "Working Women Prepare for Action," *Information Bulletin*, June 15 to July 1, 1957: 89.
27. Decisions of the ICFTU First World Congress, London, November–December 1949, Box 4, 5152, Lewis Levitzki Lorwin, International Labor Files, Kheel.
28. Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 109.
29. Ross to Gottfurcht, April 30 1957 and Ross to Tehas, April 30, 1957, both in 20/31, GMMA.
30. Nancy Pratt, Completed ICFTU Questionaire [*sic*] and May 9, 1957, Addendum to the ICFTU Questionaire (*sic*) on Women Workers, 20/31, GMMA.
31. Ross to Gottfurcht, August 28, 1959, Dehareng to Ross, September 7, 1959, Ross to Dehareng, Sept. 10, 1959, 20/31, GMMA. 3/W/6, October 8–10, 1959, 2407(b), IISH.
32. ICFTU General Secretary Omer Becu, circular, November 16, 1961, 20/31, GMMA.
33. Peterson to Meany, April 20, 1962, 20/32, GMMA.
34. Lee to Tehas, April 1, 1963, 20/32, GMMA.
35. Tulatz to Schnitzler, June 6, 1962, 1973(b), IISH. The Women's Committee would later criticize Tulatz for not including the committee in First ICFTU World Conference on Labor Education. See Richards, "Labor's Gendered Misstep."
36. 11/W/3(a)(ii), May 14–15, 1964. These figures are apparently a revision. According to another document, there had been 52 women from 24 countries, 10/W/2. Both in 20/33, GMMA.
37. Dehareng to Draper, January 24, 1963; Draper to Nat Goldfinger, September 25, 1963; Meany to Becu, April 10, 1963, all in 20/32, GMMA; The ICFTU and Women Workers, IISH.
38. Lee to Tehas, April 1, 1963, Becu to Meany, February 4, 1963, and Becu circular, January 17, 1963: all in 20/32, GMMA.
39. Draper to Dehareng and Draper to Brown, both dated April 11, 1963; Meany to Becu, April 10, 1963: all in 20/32, GMMA.
40. Meany to Becu, April 10, 1963; Tulatz to Meany, April 22, 1963, both in 20/32, GMMA.
41. Lee to Tehas, April 1, 1963, 20/32, GMMA.
42. Becu circular no. 15, Sept. 10, 1963 and Meany to Becu, Sept. 26, 1963, both in 20/32, GMMA.
43. Draper to Goldfinger, Sept. 25, 1963, 20/32, GMMA.
44. 10/W/2, 20/33, GMMA.
45. Israel and Japan were also offered permanent seats, although Japan apparently did not appoint anyone. 10/W/2, 20/33, GMMA.

46. Sutter was recommended by James A. Suffridge, an AFL-CIO vice president and president of the Retail Clerks International Union from 1944 until 1968. Meany to Sutter, January 20, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
47. Ann O'Leary Sutter [Bio Sketch], 20/33, GMMA.
48. *Women's News*, March 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
49. Peterson to Meany, February 19, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
50. Sutter to Peterson, June 3, 1964, Sutter, Report on the ICFTU/ITS Women's Committee Meeting, May 14–15, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
51. Sutter, Report, 20/33, GMMA. See Sturmthal, 198–199, 223–224.
52. Sutter, Report, 20/33, GMMA.
53. Sutter, Report, 20/33, GMMA.
54. H. P. Scherzel to Dehareng, November 18, 1963, 2396d, IISH. See also, Richards, "Labor's Gendered Misstep," 431–432.
55. 21 ISFC/13, June 18–19, 1964, in November 30–December 3, 1964, 4/9, EB, GMMA. See also, Yevette Richards, *Maida Springer, Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).
56. Sutter to Draper, June 3, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
57. Meany to Becu, October 9, 1964. 20/33, GMMA.
58. Sutter to Lee, November 15, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
59. Dehareng to Sutter, January 30, 1965, and Sutter to Lee, March 26, 1965, 20/33, GMMA.
60. Lee to Tehas, March 29, 1965, 20/33, GMMA.
61. Lee to Sutter, April 5, 1965, 8190, 20/33, GMMA.
62. Lovestone to Schnitzler, May 12, 1964, 20/33, GMMA.
63. Sutter to Lee, September 8, 1965, and 14/W/7, October 21–22 1965, in 21/1, GMMA.
64. Lee to Tehas, September 15, 1965, 21/1, GMMA.
65. Lee to Sutter, September 16, 1965, 21/1, GMMA.
66. Lee to Dehareng, October 2, 1965; Sutter to Lee and Sutter to Tada, both October 2, 1965, 21/1, GMMA.
67. Meany to Becu, October 7, 1965, 21/1, GMMA.
68. Dehareng to Sutter, February 22, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
69. Lee to Lovestone, March 9, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
70. Lee to Sutter, March 10, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
71. Sutter to Dehareng, March 23, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
72. Sutter to Lee, March 28 (stamped), 21/1, GMMA.
73. Lee to Sutter, March 29, 1966, and 15/W/7, May 26–27, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
74. Sutter to Meany, October 31, 1966, and Meany to Sutter, November 1966, 21/1, Dehareng to Friends, September 26, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
75. 22 ISFC/10 July 1965, 4/13, Resolutions of 39th EB, 1965; 43EB/2 October 4–6, 1967, 4/22 EB, GMMA.
76. Sutter to Meany, October 31, 1966, and Meany to Sutter, November 1966, 21/1, Dehareng to Friends, September 26, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
77. 16/W/5 1542, 17th meeting, 1543, 21/1, GMMA. Only one meeting of the Women's Committee was held in 1967.
78. Lee to Sutter, May 23, 1968, and Sutter to Lee, June 3, 1968, 21/1, GMMA.
79. Sutter to Lee, June 3, 1968, 21/1, GMMA.
80. See Nancy MacLean, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).
81. AFL-CIO Response to ICFTU Questionnaire, October 3, 1966, 21/1, GMMA.
82. 17/W/4, October 5–6, 1967, 21/1, GMMA.
83. 80EB/2, October 14–15, 1962, Brussels, 1570, IISH.

Part II

The Heavy Hand: Labor's Ambassadors in Europe

Chapter Four
The AFL and CIO between "Crusade" and Pluralism in Italy, 1944–1963

Alessandro Brogi

Italy had a primacy in America's Cold War policies. In 1947, it was the first country to be addressed by the newly established National Security Council; it was the nation in which the CIA's first major covert operation was tested the following year; together with France, it became the first focus of "political warfare" tactics (involving a broad coordination of overt and covert activities ranging from white propaganda to sabotage) under the watch of prominent ambassador James C. Dunn.[1] By the early 1950s, the Eisenhower administration intensified and institutionalized these factors when it established the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), which began its activities by coordinating overt propaganda with actions—mostly covert—aimed at the economic and bureaucratic structures of the fragile democracies in France and Italy. It was in Italy also that the Cold War fears of falling dominoes favoring the Communist foe were expressed for the first time: As early as 1944, Italy's exiled leaders in the United States explained to Washington that if their country fell to Communist subversion, the same fate would strike the Balkans, Spain, and France, leading to the "Sovietization of Europe."[2] Italy's strategic importance was beyond dispute: Gaining influence in the Mediterranean peninsula, said a 1945 report by the US State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, was essential to preserve "American dependence upon the lines of communication to oil supplies in the Near East." US investments in the Italian economy had steadily increased through the first decade of the Fascist regime. The presence of the Vatican in Italy bore considerable importance for America's Roman Catholics; American politicians, particularly those of the Democratic Party, also had a stake in the support of six million Italian Americans.[3] Paramount to these strategic, economic, and political considerations was the threat posed by the Italian Communist Party (PCI), which, in the immediate postwar period, became the largest, most powerful pro-Soviet organized party in the West. The party also dominated the highly politicized trade union movement, which, by agreement of the anti-Fascist coalition of the Center and the Left parties, formed the *Confederazione Generale del Lavoro Italiana* (CGIL) in 1944.

Italy was the first Axis ally to fall under the control of the Allied military government in World War II and, as such, represented the first test for America's postwar plans for democracy in Europe, starting with the recovery effort under the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. In so doing, a strong connection was established between democracy and President Franklin Roosevelt's "freedom from want" principle.[4] In this context, it was in Italy, the first liberated country facing potential upheaval that favored Marxist groups, that American labor's Cold War strategies had their inception. Italy, in sum, was one of the main breaking grounds for US labor strategies to promote the American model of modernization, productivity, and ostensibly apolitical, "pure" trade unionism.

The strategies of the American labor movement, as it has been widely recognized, were not a mere corollary to US plans of political and economic stabilization in Europe; US labor organizations anticipated, inspired, and helped direct the State Department's decisions, constituting a pivotal element of its diplomatic action for at least ten years. American trade unions' increasing international activism positioned them to be among the first to understand and tackle the various sources of Communist power in Italy. Economic distress and the promise of material restoration combined with a social restructuring on behalf of the working class constituted only the most apparent reasons for the Communist Party's political appeal. Through its record in the World War II Resistance, the party assumed an aura of a defender of national interests, even as it struggled to reconcile patriotism and proletarian internationalism; the party also enjoyed organizational power, with an ability to seize key economic and political institutions, and to retain positions in the mid-level bureaucracy of the state even after its expulsion from the postwar national unity government in 1947. The party also consistently followed founder Antonio Gramsci's project of replacing the established order's culture with its own cultural hegemony, successfully extending its reach at both the high and the mass cultural levels. Identifying capitalist oppression with American domination, the PCI's propaganda appeal profited from traditions of anti-Americanism in Italian culture. Together with the Socialists (PSI), either in an electoral front or in a strong political alliance, the Italian Communists thus polled about one-third of the votes in the first national elections of 1948 and 1953. The PCI's subversive intents, despite its ostensible adherence to parliamentary tactics in the postwar period, were immediately apparent to Washington.

The American trade union movement, especially under the strongly anti-Communist influence of the AFL and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), needed to reckon with all these components of Communist influence in Italy, and tread cautiously in its democratic stabilization attempts lest American interference backfire under attacks from the powerful PCI propaganda. Here, I do not intend to narrate in detail the various instances of labor intervention in Italy, but rather examine its main motives, stages, and trajectories. My main argument is that anti-Communist strategies devised by US labor in cooperation or competition with the State Department gradually evolved from rigid parameters or direct assault to a more flexible, nuanced approach that allowed discretion to Socialist groups and the relative opening to the Left in Europe's governments.

Between Crusade and Reform Socialism

The American foreign policy establishment refrained from heavy intervention in Italian affairs until 1947, planning direct involvement only in case of emergency, such as the never discarded possibility of Communist insurrection. Even economic rehabilitation, seen as the best means to bolster the legitimacy of the moderate and conservative parties, was tentative and insufficient until the Marshall Plan set in. Another reason for early caution was the wartime priority of defeating Germany through as vast a political alliance as possible in Italy, resembling the diplomacy of the Grand Alliance. Following the war, as anti-Fascist coalition governments including the Communists persisted in France, Italy, and Belgium, American anti-communism remained guarded or unfocused, with concessions to those nations' economies, diplomatic status, and institutional stability, but without a clearly defined strategy connecting all those concessions.

The link between the needs of economic and institutional stabilization, however, became immediately apparent in devastated Europe. Washington's emphasis on that correlation also exposed American propensity to nation-building, or social engineering, which stemmed from the United States' own cultural identity, based more on political creed (with its traditions of constitutionalism and democracy) than on a national religion or sense of ethnicity.[5] The nation-building approach, applied to the reconstruction of Europe and assisted with urgent invitations by the European leaders themselves, favored immediate attention to restoring government structures and administrative efficiency, thus revealing the lack of a full understanding of the European distinction between state and a national community that could be defined by shared history and culture. While gradually grasping the cultural realities that would make the approach to recovery and growth of nations like Italy different from the American model, US officials nevertheless continued to prioritize their immediate goal of restoring market capitalism in cooperation with Europe's most solidly anti-Communist forces, and to place faith in the presumably inexorable appeal of American pragmatism. These were the same problems bound to affect the American trade unions' strategies in Italy.

While, by the end of the war, the State Department still struggled to fathom Italy's political realities, American labor leaders, particularly from the AFL, were quick to identify the correlation between the economic and institutional power of the PCI. Anti-Fascism had nourished the popular-front government's faith that working class empowerment was the best way to prevent any possible Fascist resurgence. This belief, though short-lived, contributed to giving the PCI an enduring influence in Italian politics. After 20 years of Fascist-dominated unions, the fall of the regime benefitted the Communists also because, as noted in 1945 by Serafino Romualdi—the ILGWU leader who had been honed by the State Department to conduct US labor policies in Latin America during the war and then joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) staff in Italy in the summer of 1944—the Communists were best able to fill in that institutional vacuum, leaving the "democratic elements" of the Italian working class relatively unorganized.[6]

Indeed, the most crucial institutional lever for the PCI was the labor confederation it dominated. The CGIL became the PCI's main instrument of social and economic influence. Through the course of the following two decades, labor action also exhibited the party's main moments of strength and weakness. The CGIL's promise of rapid social justice during the last year of the war, together with its Resistance record, gave the PCI luster; its political anti-Marshall Plan strikes exposed the party's subordination to the Cominform, while also alienating large numbers in the working class who saw the benefits of US assistance, thus causing the first splits and defections by the Christian Democrat and Socialist components of the labor movement. But the CGIL recouped power and leverage, thanks to its pivotal role in the pacifist campaigns against nuclear weapons (the Stockholm Appeal) and the Atlantic Alliance's Mutual Defense Assistance Program. Finally, in the midst of defections and declining membership by the mid-1950s, the CGIL began to restore its appeal by fighting the Italian government's and business's distortions caused by American-led policies of productivity and consumerism.

While the question of whether the AFL's operations in Italy were the result of independent initiative or instrumentalized by the State Department has been answered by illustrating the symbiosis between the AFL and State Department policies, the fact remains that as early as 1942, the AFL and the Italian American Labor Council (IALC)—an organization founded by the ILGWU's Luigi Antonini—anticipated the focus of Washington's anti-Communist Cold War policies.[7] The AFL was first, even in the midst of the Grand Alliance politics, to alert the public in the United States and Europe about the dangers of Soviet subversion. That year it already cooperated—through the ILGWU—with the OSS (including the CIO's Arthur J. Goldberg, nominally leader of the OSS's Labor Section) to conduct intelligence operations in contact with the resistance movements in Europe, and with the clear intention of favoring the moderate Socialist factions within those groups. By 1944, with the creation of the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), the AFL was the first American organization to attack the Soviet Union and its control over world trade union organizations, and to orchestrate funding operations to help the anti-Communist elements within each European trade union movement. Immediately at the time of the Italian armistice, the IALC and the AFL inaugurated a campaign to raise $250,000 to help restore the occupied country's "free" trade unions, identified at first with the moderate Socialist elements.[8] Not as much money reached the coffers of the Italian Socialists at that time, but by early 1944 the flow of money had begun.

The symbiosis with the State Department's actions may not have seemed immediately evident. The Allied Military government in particular gave priority to the defeat of Fascism and Nazi Germany. The AFL and IALC claimed, "Well before the State Department policy-makers realized it, that in the contest for postwar supremacy in Italy, the battlefield would be the working class."[9] In fact, the State Department was a quick study, and the cooperation between American labor and Washington became clear through institutional ties—first through the OSS, then through the establishment of labor attachés in US embassies by 1944. The ambassadors to France and Italy also rapidly understood the

importance of adopting a flexible and enlightened approach to the moderate Left in both countries.[10] Supporting the Socialists above all seemed the best way to prevent a Communist monopoly of the trade union movement and, basically, Communist control of many aspects of reconstruction and even of a resurgent nationalist pride—a control that the PCF and PCI tried to wrest within the union governments by waging their own "battles for production" and by tactically limiting strikes through the liberation and immediate postwar period.[11] As early as 1944, American officials contemplated support of Pietro Nenni's Socialists (then called the *Partito Socialista di Unità Proletaria*, or PSIUP), who had not yet confirmed a unity of action pact with the Communists. Late in 1946, the State Department still entertained the idea of "knocking off Nenni's ideological blinders" by inviting him to Washington together with Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi for talks on the first major US loan to Italy.[12] During the first half of 1947, George Kennan, the founder of the containment strategy, insisted that to combat Communist influence in Western Europe, it was best to support forces from the moderate Left; he further argued that Communists who were forced to cooperate in a government with the moderate Left might become more tractable than if they stayed in "unscrupulous opposition," and might ultimately "repudiate the Kremlin's authority."[13]

While not going as far as condoning the PCI's participation in the unity government, until 1947, leaders of the AFL and ILGWU maintained a strategy favoring the Italian moderate Left, including efforts to coopt or moderate the Socialist Party. To be sure, Luigi Antonini, who arrived in Italy in 1944, followed the ILGWU leader David Dubinsky's anti-Communist line with the fervor of a crusader. But that did not make him an instant supporter of conservative Italian labor, namely, the Christian Democrats in the CGIL or in the Church-affiliated *Associazione Cattolica Lavoratori Italiani* (ACLI). His background placed him in the gradualist tradition of Italian socialism. He was a supporter of Roosevelt's New Deal, a founder of the American Labor Party in 1936, and a leading proponent of Dubinsky's Anti-Fascist League. His closest collaborator, Vanni Montana, also in Italy from 1944, was a Socialist exile and Italian editor of the ILGWU paper *Giustizia*. His other main Italian contacts, Giuseppe Modigliani, Ignazio Silone, Serafino Romualdi, and, from Rome, Giuseppe Saragat and Giuseppe Faravelli, also represented Italy's reform socialism. Until the end of the war, Antonini did not surrender the hope of converting the maximalist faction of Pietro Nenni to "free" unionism and democracy.[14] Like Antonini, the AFL's top officials, Irving Brown and Jay Lovestone—who, as leaders of the FTUC, coordinated the AFL's international labor policies—also virulently opposed Stalinism. Both former Communists, they displayed the zeal of reformed drunkards. This line closely followed the violently anti-Communist precepts of AFL leaders Samuel Gompers, William Green, and George Meany. But the Federation's strategy remained at first anchored to a rather flexible approach to the Socialists.[15] For John C. Adams, the first labor attaché at the Rome embassy, this flexibility should have gone further, fostering cooperation between Communists and Christian Democrats within the CGIL. In Adams's view, this was essential for the "victory of tolerance, democracy, and mutual

understanding" and for the preemption of extremist forces "from the right or the left."[16] The AFL's main goals in Italy until 1947 did not contemplate breaking up the CGIL, but rather to shift its balance of power in favor of the anti-Communist forces within it; it was also hoping they would take over the party by supporting the Right-wing Socialists. By the end of 1946, this last goal had a corollary: If the Socialists failed to conquer the CGIL, they should form a breakaway party that could join the Left-wing Christian Democrats in a new formation.[17]

American labor's understanding of the importance of nationalism for each Italian party was both promising and problematic. Ethnic ties, by origins or by connection through union networks, presumably attuned American labor leaders to Italy's nationalist sensitivity as a recumbent nation. The State Department, until the onset of the Cold War in mid-1946, credited the CGIL as the institution that best represented Italian unity against Fascism and as a moderating force in times of unrest typical of a nation on its uncertain transition to democracy. Romualdi and the CIO's George Baldanzi (also in Italy from 1944) had a rather sensitive and nuanced view of what would constitute "pro-Italianism."[18] Romualdi, until his departure from Italy at the end of 1945, always cautioned Antonini about the importance of Italy's care for the unity of anti-Fascist forces, with each CGIL faction vying for the honor and credit of reviving the country's "democratic patriotism" (a fine distinction from "nationalism" for the former Fascist country)—hence the need to give token contributions to the CGIL in 1945. Baldanzi, who was Antonini's archrival, had of course his own personal and ideological reasons for favoring a milder approach to the CGIL; but he often used the specter of US interference and consequent backlash in his attempts to discourage exclusive funding of the Right-wing Socialist factions. John Adams also fully understood the importance of the PCI's patriotic credentials, magnified by the natural appeal and charisma of Party Secretary Palmiro Togliatti and CGIL Communist leader Giuseppe Di Vittorio.[19] Aid could come to Italy but, in order to sense the "drift," Italians could not be made to feel that their path to democracy depended solely on America's choices and models. Romualdi, following a dispute in early 1945 between Antonini and Togliatti about the IALC's funds to the Right-wing Socialists—a dispute that significantly elicited no public endorsement of Antonini by his Italian friends—urged the ILGWU leader not to simply transplant into the CGIL the same anti-Communist crusading style that divided the American labor movement because "the situation in Italy [was] quite different than the one in the New York working class"; in this contingency, the Italian Socialists needed "collaboration with the Communist Party" because they could not "shape their tactics to the requirements of the Italian-American colony of New York and its trade union movement." Ethnicity, overall, was no guarantee of a better understanding of the political subtleties that prompted most Italian leaders to ostensibly preserve the unity of the anti-Fascist coalition: Vanni Montana, for example, was never subtle in his evaluation of Socialist divisions and showed public contempt for the "Communist-dominated Nenni Socialists." Antonini mended fences with Nenni, but Romualdi's letter also indicated a paradox in the alleged care of the Italian American labor leaders for their country of origin: The Italian leadership of the AFL and ILGWU was paternalistic, often more exceptionalist than most

US diplomats with its "one-size-fits-all" cure of "free" unionism, and also subject to charges of collusion with the Italian immigrant "prominenti" community of former Fascist sympathizers, best exemplified by Antonini's collaboration with its most notorious figure, the publisher Generoso Pope.[20] So it was no surprise that in 1948, when the State Department began to organize delegations of technicians and teachers to assist the labor attaché, it decided to exclude Italian Americans because the embassy "found that persons of recent Italian descent often inspire[d] resentment among Italians."[21]

Romualdi's letter also indicated the main enduring problem with the Socialist Party and Socialist union members. Nenni's Socialists opted for unity with the Communists not only because of the class-based politics of Italy, but also because they were mindful of the divisions on the Left that had led to the rise of Fascism. The now weaker Socialists also knew that they would stand to lose in a divorce from the better-organized and united Communist Party. They hoped that, through unity, they would regain their leadership of the Italian Left.[22] But the pro-Stalinist attitude of the Italian Socialists through the first postwar decade made them in fact the most secure ally of the PCI. American labor's hope to see the rift that had occurred between Communists and Socialists in France replicated in Italy was frustrated.

The IALC-ILGWU's funding operations displayed another major paradox of their pursuit of apolitical trade unionism. Their decision from the start to rely on Socialist autonomy made the struggle for free unions depend on the highly politicized debate within the Italian labor movement. The call for "free" trade unionism therefore became in itself a highly political activity based on the AFL's anti-Communist priorities; it further sounded hollow, for it hinged on Italy's infighting among parties and among their factions. This was made worse by the rise of Catholic influence in the Italian labor movement.[23] In the final analysis, political maneuvering to obtain apolitical unions in a highly politicized and highly polarized situation was bound to create divisions, not shifts, in the trade union movement's political hegemony.

The problem was aggravated by divisions within the US labor movement itself. Both the AFL and the CIO undertook their overseas diplomacy with similar intentions of promoting in Europe the same politics of growth that characterized America's postwar economy. Both upheld international action in defense of the US system of mass production and consumerism. And, similarly, they considered the reconstruction of Europe based on high productivity essential for the continued growth of the United States, favoring American exports and thus averting another Great Depression. But the AFL's craft unionism still clashed with the CIO's identification with industrial unionism. While the former fought for the abolition of any regulatory agency and pledged the return to free negotiation between industry and labor, the latter attributed a pivotal role to the government. The CIO had developed a strong dependence on government mediation and had been, since its inception, focused on social negotiations aimed at constructing a welfare state. Maintaining the corporatist New Deal model was vital for CIO leaders. Whereas the AFL constantly upheld its anti-Communist priorities, the CIO at first favored the anti-Fascist coalitions and, together with the British

Trades Union Congress (TUC), helped revive the International Federation of Trade Unions and found the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), which had a strong Soviet component. The AFL was the only major trade union that refused to join the WFTU, while the CIO rejected the AFL-dominated FTUC. The CIO's alignment with a firmer Cold War policy did not occur until 1947. The Marshall Plan revived the CIO's hopes for an international role—heretofore largely precluded—in conjunction with the AFL, and prompted them, together with the TUC, to finally abandon the WFTU in 1949 and join with the AFL in the new International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which brought the Western "free" unions together and excluded the Soviet Bloc. But even in this political alliance the AFL and CIO continued to diverge on fundamental goals for the American assistance program for Europe. The CIO still harbored the hope for a third way between communism and "illiberal" capitalism, best expressed by union president Walter Reuther, with his declaration of being "neither with Wall Street nor with Stalin."[24]

Crusading with the Christian Democrats

Through 1946, the AFL and the CIO continued to clash over which Socialist faction to support, with Antonini moving further to the Right in support of the party's most conservative wing of Faravelli, and Baldanzi sticking with Nenni. But when, in October, the party's majority renewed its unity-of-action pact with the Communists, which a few months later resulted in a split, giving birth to the Social Democratic Party (PSLI) under Giuseppe Saragat, the US labor forces began to converge toward the Center. With the Socialist-Communist union gaining electoral strength, the matter seemed even more urgent. In the fall of 1947, the State Department elevated the diplomatic role of the AFL by increasing consultations with the labor attachés in Europe and expanding the Labor Department with the creation of a trade union consultative body on international affairs, which included Lovestone and the CIO's Michael Ross.[25] The CIA, too, from its inception that same fall, established a link with this consultative body, and turned the FTUC and AFL into its main funding channels to "free" labor in Europe.[26]

The AFL moved its focus further Right toward the Catholics in response to the Social Democrats' initial refusal to participate in the coalition led by the Christian Democrats (DC) after the expulsion of the Communists and Socialists from the unity government in May 1947; the Social Democrats' internal divisions; and their poor results at the 1947 Florence conference of the CGIL.[27] This turn was also prompted by the Cold War escalation and the State Department's decision to rely on the DC party as the main bastion against communism in Italy. The success of the European Recovery Program (ERP) enacting the Marshall Plan depended on the support of the free labor movement. If the non-Communist groups could not control the CGIL, then the United States would resort to the same covert effort as in France to promote the split of the Italian national federation. The creation of the *Force Ouvrière* from the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) split in the aftermath of the failed insurrectionary strikes in France that fall had undoubtedly been a success. While the United States "sealed a division that was probable in any

case," it felt particularly proud of its agency. Ambassador Jefferson Caffery greeted the union split as "the most important event that ha[d] occurred in France since the Liberation." What mattered most was that a very politicized maneuver helped create an ostensibly apolitical union movement that followed the American model. Ideally, Italy would follow suit. The Americans' expectation—soon to be foiled—was that, as a consequence of labor splits, the reformist forces in France and Italy would be emboldened and united, and Marshall Planners could thus attain their major goal of making class warfare obsolete in both countries.[28]

The PCI's opposition to the ERP caused similar divisions within the CGIL: The Christian Democrat, Social Democrat, and Republican union leaders Giulio Pastore, Giovanni Canini, and Ferruccio Parri participated in the March 1948 London trade union conference that endorsed the Plan.[29] In rejecting "aid to stimulate investments and production . . . the Communists in a certain sense placed themselves outside of the normal political process." Their virulent opposition to the Marshall Plan played a "key role" in the Popular Front's defeat in the national elections of April 1948.[30] The AFL and CIO, like many other US agencies, lobbies, and interest groups, injected themselves in the campaign for Italy's first national elections. They endorsed the US government's promise to return the border city of Trieste if the DC won the election; they also raised funds for the campaign, complementing the CIA's covert financing of centrist parties; and Antonini, Montana, William Green, and CIO leaders Reuther and James Carey made radio broadcasts to advertise the benefits of the American model of labor relations. The CIO also had a major role in organizing the London trade union conference in March.[31]

The national elections established the Christian Democrats' political domination. The US unions found common ground in the decision to promote free unions (though, for a while, the CIO kept hoping for a resurgent Social Democratic force within the CGIL), and the State Department further empowered the AFL and CIO to carry out those policies, creating a Division of Labor Advisors to the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), which managed Marshall aid.[32] Cold War realities impelled the split with urgency (indeed the decision to support Pastore's secession plans preceded the Italian national elections but, tactfully, US action was postponed until the fall).[33] But that same urgency did not take into account the realities of the political imbalance in Italy. The split was premature: It did not foster unity but more factionalism, a divided opinion that also reflected enduring divisions within the American labor movement itself.

The Catholic factions split from the CGIL in the aftermath of the workers' upheaval sparked by an assassination attempt on Communist leader Togliatti on July 14, 1948, forming the Free National Federation of Labor (LCGIL) in October. In fact, their secession was forced by CGIL Communist leader Di Vittorio, who realized that a break at this point would limit the number of workers joining the DC while exposing the LCGIL's dependence on the Vatican and the United States, thus helping the Communists retain the Social Democratic factions. While most American labor leaders feared a "white" union dominated by the Church and the ACLI, the new labor attaché, Thomas Lane, and Irving Brown trusted Giulio Pastore and favored the split. The State Department, on the advice of Antonini and Lane, withheld funds from the Social Democratic factions of the CGIL until they

also formed a separate "free" union.[34] In the following spring, Lane and ILGWU delegates (with the reluctant endorsement of the CIO as well) organized a visit to the United States by a delegation formed by Pastore, Canini, and the Republican Giovanni Rocchi, which showcased America's productivity and consumer benefits. The trip sealed the deal, leading to the formation of the Social Democratic Free Union (FIL) in May 1949.[35] On one issue—Pastore's dependence on the Vatican—the Communists had been right: Social Democrat union leader Alberto Simonini told a US official that the LCGIL "smells of the sacristy."[36] But Di Vittorio had been wrong to think that the breakaway factions' reliance on the United States would be a liability; in fact, with ERP aid flowing into Italy, that reliance gave the Social Democrats and Catholics prestige and a starting point for unity. It was only a starting point though.

Through the rest of the year, the AFL and the State Department kept trying to build the unification of the FIL and LCGIL, but to no avail.[37] The Social Democrats, guided by Italo Viglianesi and Giusppe Romita, kept suspecting that Christian Democratic labor leaders were controlled by the Church. A unified confederation, the *Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Laboratori* (CISL), including Canini's faction, was founded on May 1, 1950, but the Romita Socialists of the *Partito Socialista Unitario* (PSU) had already given birth to a separate *Unione Italiana del Lavoro* (UIL) a few months earlier (even after the Social Democrats fused the PSU and the PSLI into one party in the spring of 1951, their trade union remained weak). Both the CISL and the UIL became candidates to the new ICFTU.[38] The State Department worried that the UIL would cause a hemorrhage of Social Democrats from the CISL.[39] For the AFL and the CIO, this division caused further problems, once again exposing their own divisions.

Simply put, reflecting the mutual diffidence between Christian Democrats and Socialists in Italy, the CIO thought the CISL was too confessional, while the AFL contended that the UIL was too weak and, for some, still too "Marxist." In itself, this distinction highlighted the fact that the presumably "apolitical" unions were anything but free of party affiliation. Pastore, for all his efforts to represent pure and simple unionism and rely on his association with US assistance, could not escape the tight embrace of his own party, which, for the most part, imposed a purely technical interpretation of the first productivity organizations.[40]

When, in November 1951, the ICFTU executive committee accepted the UIL candidacy—on condition that it stopped its attacks on the CISL and pledged no common action with Communist unions—the State Department turned more favorable to the Social Democratic factions. The CIO, together with the British unions, continued to back Viglianesi's UIL while the AFL kept trusting Pastore's union, holding special regard for the interclassist nature of the DC itself, as well as the CISL's enthusiasm for productivity policies. Through 1952, the State Department found itself in the difficult position of supporting both the UIL and the CISL, especially out of fear that the latter might veer toward stronger identification with the Church. In summary,[41] by the early 1950s, while the State Department encouraged the far-fetched negotiations for "organic unity" between the two Italian free federations, the AFL and CIO tried to pull Washington toward their respective privileged Italian interlocutors.

Psy-War

While American labor showed such divisiveness, Washington had already begun to reinforce and centralize its anti-Communist strategies. Confronted with resilient Communist power, especially during the anti-nuclear and anti-NATO campaigns of the Moscow-sponsored Peace Partisans Movement, the Truman administration had shifted "from a defensive to an aggressive posturing," as a public policy background paper put it in April 1950.[42] Early the following year, the desire to "rollback" Soviet positions everywhere prompted the creation of the Psychological Strategy Board as an annex to the National Security Council. The new office included the under secretary of state, the deputy secretary of defense, the CIA director, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Although the propaganda offensive against Eastern Europe was intense, the PSB's most pressing task was to counteract Communist propaganda and institutional power in France and Italy. Through secretly coded projects ("Midiron" for France, and "Clydesdale" for Italy), the PSB designed its comprehensive anti-Communist assault.[43] Psychological warfare basically pursued an ad hoc series of aggressive initiatives within the broader strategy of political warfare first inaugurated in the late 1940s. Increasing US support for the free trade union movement and distributing Off-Shore Procurement (OSP) contracts that discriminated against industries where Communist trade unions were predominant constituted the two most prominent tactics within this large range of political, economic, and propaganda initiatives.[44]

The comprehensive nature of this attack reflected the realization that, as Washington concluded by 1951, "the doctrine of economic determinism [was] too simple a hypothesis for France and Italy."[45] Under the first signs of economic recovery in both countries, Communist power persisted most surprisingly through the two parties' institutional and cultural clout. It was also the result of still inadequate economic reform, especially in Italy, where the government kept favoring growth without redistribution. At the same time, the ruling parties eluded Washington's advice on how to deal with the Communist opposition. The PSB quickly noted that some entrepreneurs and DC leaders clearly preferred a "modus vivendi with the CGIL" to keep their trade options open with the East.[46] In 1952, the PSB also concluded that Italy was evasive on military commitments partly and admittedly because of the strength of the CGIL.[47] Having recouped power and prestige through the Peace Campaign, the Communist labor movement represented the crucial connection between a well-orchestrated anti-American propaganda and a strong economic appeal.[48]

But the scope of the American centralized strategy—especially under the Eisenhower administration, which reformed the PSB, renaming it the Operations Coordinating Board and placing it under stricter supervision by the White House—reduced the room for the AFL's initiatives. Instead, the National Security Council, the CIA, and the ambassadors in Rome and Paris conducted the main assault on the Communists' institutional power. In Rome, Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce—a fervent arch-conservative who was part of the inner circle of "psychological warriors"—forcefully led the attack on the CGIL. In 1954, she applied the discriminating clause on OSP contracts against FIAT, until the automaker

complied by blacklisting many of its CGIL workers. This is not to say that US labor representatives were now utterly excluded from any role in psy-war. The CIA continued to utilize the FTUC to finance anti-Communist activities within the international labor movement, and the main representative of the CIA-FTUC connection was Carmel Offie, who was in Turin while Luce negotiated with FIAT. Offie had previously worked as the personal assistant to Frank Wisner, the director of the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination. Since 1948, the OPC had worked to perfect the instruments of political warfare, most notably covert operations involving support of indigenous anti-Communist elements.[49]

FIAT's compliance seemed to yield further results the following year when elections by the automaker's union committees shifted the majority from the CGIL to the CISL; even more unexpectedly, the elections quadrupled the strength of the UIL. While the AFL's Harry Goldberg greeted the results with satisfaction, he could not hide the fact that the workers' endorsement of the Social Democrats diminished the prospects for their merger with the CISL.[50] Furthermore, this political climate indicated that the Italian political and industrial leadership tended to mitigate the aggressive methods of American psychological warfare. FIAT's managing director Vittorio Valletta resented Clare Boothe Luce's "stubborn" pressures. Even an apparently resolute "cold warrior," Prime Minister Mario Scelba, who announced a series of measures for the removal of public officials "who did not guarantee their allegiance to the democratic state," never actually implemented them. The announcement was simply Scelba's ploy to obtain full US assistance for an economic program he presented in competition with the plan by former finance minister Ezio Vanoni, which had initiated large public investments.[51] The Christian Democrats in particular had secured their political hegemony, thanks to a tacit understanding that marginalized but did not exclude the PCI from the country's political life. One of Prime Minister Alcide De Gasperi's first objections to the PSB's repressive measures was that "democracy was a young somewhat delicate plant in Italy" and he could not "go outside the constitution in attempting to suppress the Communists without risking the destruction of democracy."[52] By 1955, psychological warfare had largely backfired. The appeal of American productivity also had encountered problems.

Productivity

The diplomatic role of the American labor movement was still considered essential in promoting productivity policies in Europe, and especially in France and Italy. The productivity drives still appeared the best way to "Americanize" the union movement in both countries. They were, according to the Mutual Security Agency (MSA), America's "main dynamic idea to offer" Europe and "the major contribution of the United States in the 20th Century to Western Civilization [*sic*]."[53] The ERP, which was based on the assumption that the American model of productivity, Keynesian reform, and New Deal corporatism should be replicated in Europe, became the key for American labor's attempts to form an alliance between the CISL and the UIL. Thanks to American-inspired reform, which would counter backwardness in business practices and political outlook,

economic relations in Europe could, as Charles Maier best put it, "transcend earlier class conflict" and become altogether "free of conflict."[54]

It was easier said than done. The US labor strategy of supporting the CISL and UIL had to be harmonized with the need to strike a balance between planning and laissez-faire forces in the Italian economy, a balance that, in the years preceding the Marshall Plan, had already proven difficult. Furthermore, the State Department, and in particular the pro-laissez-faire economic counselor at the US embassy in Rome, Henry J. Tasca, often expressed concerns that, although Italy's recovery required some economic planning, organizations such as the *Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale*, a huge mixed state and private industrial conglomerate created during Fascism, could be instrumentalized by the Left parties who were too eager to expand this public component. Rather than pressing the Italian government with specific planning recommendations, the embassy at first simply encouraged Italy's classic liberals and Alcide De Gasperi to adopt some planning themselves.[55]

The campaign for productivity, taking off in Italy in 1949, was essentially a modification of the welfare-oriented New Deal—especially through the American model of mass production and standardization of the production process—and direct private negotiations. It served pure and simple unionism. It was therefore welcomed by the Christian Democrats, with their interclassist outlook, and by their CISL affiliate. Managed first by the ECA, then under the MSA, the productivity drives exerted pressure on US aid recipients through propaganda and education programs for entrepreneurs, technicians, and labor leaders, and through the distribution of contracts, equipment, and production know-how to complying industries.[56]

Against Pastore's enthusiasm stood Viglianesi's skepticism because of the strong identification of the productivity plans with DC economic projects, which the UIL did not believe would truly match increased productivity with higher wages for workers. After the creation of the Italian National Productivity Committee in October 1951, the main task for the ICFTU was to mediate between the two federations.[57] Logic suggested to the AFL representatives that the Social Democrats of the *Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano* (PSDI), due to their own political weakness, kept their union on a shorter leash than the powerful and more secure Christian Democrats did with the CISL.[58] But, of course, it was not that simple. Pastore, assisted by the expertise of the academic Mario Romani, did try to cast the CISL as the true Italian model of apolitical trade union adhering to the productivity system. As such, he further earned the trust of the AFL. Romani, in 1951, even conducted exploratory conferences with the ACLI for the application of American "human relations" methods. But his proposal met with indifference from the industrialists' organizations and from the ruling Christian Democrats. The AFL continued to provide almost exclusive assistance to the CISL, thus foiling the attempts by the ICFTU to shape a united front between the CISL and the UIL. The two unions did finally agree to form a joint committee in February 1954, but Viglianesi remained persuaded that the AFL favored the CISL based on their misapprehended strategic belief that the Catholics constituted the best bulwark against the Communists.[59] The AFL in fact did realize the objective difficulty

of "indoctrinating" Italian labor and industry with the American model. At the end of 1953, most US officials, including Irving Brown, concluded that, "The American labor experience was not applicable to the Italian realities."[60] The CISL in particular was caught between the rock of Socialist diffidence and the hard place of DC budget policies.

France and Italy, more than other recipient nations, adapted the Marshall Plan to their specific national agendas: In Italy through deflationary policies combined with the DC's adaptation of Italian corporatism; and in France with Jean Monnet's Modernization Plan, which diverged from ECA officials' investment priorities.[61] The large ranks of Italian traditionalist businessmen, following the leadership of Angelo Costa, who headed the Italian industrialists association (Confindustria), or Léon Gingembre, chief of the French small employers' federation, also objected, identifying the preservation of ancestral traditions and old practices in the economy as a source of national prestige against the American "productivist," mass-consumption model.[62] The Confindustria also found support among conservative DC leaders such as Scelba and Giuseppe Pella (treasury minister then prime minister through the early 1950s) who favored balanced budgets over fixing the unemployment crisis through negotiations with the unions.

Even the industrial groups that did embark on productivity management, such as FIAT, the steel industry of Oscar Sinigaglia, or the firms of Adriano Olivetti, updated technical knowledge while profiting from the high unemployment levels to impose social discipline and productive efficiency. They refused to adapt to "genuine dialogue with the union side." For the rest of the 1950s, "productivity increased rapidly, but wages did not keep up."[63] American officials could find solace in the conviction that scientific management would soon be matched with corporative collaboration and rising consumerism; together, these components would gradually help transform political problems into technical ones, and diminish the role of class conflict in the Italian economy. But this gradualism revealed a painful reality.

Most US officials failed to realize that the process of Americanization (as many interpreted modernization) that started with the Marshall Plan had its main social effect in sparking what ECA officials had called the "revolution of rising expectations."[64] Productivity was not enough if maldistribution persisted. Even when a more widespread consumerism granted the masses unprecedented benefits, the main problem was, as Ambassador Caffery had earlier recognized about France, that those whose gratification was delayed would remain "sullen, dissatisfied and distrustful" of their rulers and of America's intentions.[65] One of the main indexes of rising consumerist trends in Europe was the introduction of supermarketing during the late 1950s. It was, as Victoria de Grazia has illustrated, the "story of a purposeful, consumer-oriented globalizing capitalism" that was most successful in Italy, notwithstanding the backwardness of its consumer indicators and the long tradition of small shopkeeping. But this transformation worked because the income gaps were higher there than in most of Western Europe, favoring the prospect for chain stores with lower food prices. Richard W. Boogaart, the Kansas entrepreneur who first probed Italy for the introduction of chain stores, addressed the problem bluntly: "We asked the Italians to push a Cadillac—he noted—when they are unable to even buy a FIAT."[66]

As late as 1963, US ambassador G. Frederick Reinhardt noted how all groups that felt excluded from the economic boom converged under the Communist banners: Besides a higher number of women and of the educated youth, the demographically declining groups such as sharecroppers and artisans now joined the ranks of still-dissatisfied workers. The PCI also gained in the South, where, a US official noted in 1962, "poverty [was] still extreme." "With aid of hindsight—Reinhardt wrote—it now seems that many people felt sharper desire to protest because they had not shared, at least sufficiently in their view, in economic progress."[67]

By the late 1950s, these social and political realities, the standstill in the CISL-UIL merger attempts, and the results of the FIAT elections had already prompted the State Department and the AFL-CIO to reconsider their priorities. This reevaluation was an intrinsic part of a gradual transformation of psychological warfare toward a more flexible and pluralist approach.

Psy-War Transformed

With the PCI's power relatively in check, and the PCF isolated, a frontal attack on communism in Western Europe was no longer necessary by the mid-1950s. But with their staying power and their effects on the other main political forces, the two parties remained an indirect threat, no less insidious than before. As such, they prompted the United States to adopt an equally indirect political and diplomatic response. The Operations Coordinating Board had become aware that psy-war had caused backlash or manipulation by America's political allies (most blatantly the Italian Christian Democrats), and stopped discussing it in the summer of 1955.[68] America's strategy of intervention became increasingly indirect and flexible. This approach coincided with a gradual evolution within US diplomacy toward tolerating and even encouraging mild forms of anti-Americanism in order to deflect more strident ones.[69] The Eisenhower administration's maneuvers included a calibration of diplomatic support to French and Italian national aspirations and encouragement of their option for interdependence (i.e., European integration) against traditional nationalism, and a conscious decision to second leaders with enough sense of independence from Washington (e.g., Charles de Gaulle in France, and DC leader Amintore Fanfani in Italy) in order to prevent worse scenarios of utter anti-American backlash led or partly inspired by the Communists. By the mid-1950s, US political warfare had become an intrinsic part of its diplomatic activity.[70]

On labor politics, this translated into the State Department's decision to surrender its plans to unify the CISL and UIL groups. In the aftermath of the FIAT elections, even the AFL realized that the UIL, while less compliant with US productivity projects, was, perhaps for that reason or because of the still strong class connotation of Italian labor, an asset: It had now sufficient strength to absorb radical workers.[71] In agreement with the British TUC, and even with FIAT's Valletta, the AFL leaders such as Harry Goldberg and Edward Scicluna concluded that the UIL, as a "third force" between the CISL and CGIL, was likely to attract or coopt the Nenni Socialists.[72] This trend seemed even more auspicious when

Nenni, in the aftermath of the XXth Soviet Communist Party Congress and the Hungarian events of 1956, broke up with the PCI and asked the CGIL to leave the WFTU and begin cooperating with the ICFTU.[73] The unification of the AFL and CIO in 1955 had a moderating effect on both, but especially on the AFL's aggressive tactics abroad. The AFL's conversion to a softer position also reflected the diminished interest of the State Department and the CIA in the AFL's most zealous anti-Communists,[74] as Washington began to adopt a general flexibility toward the Italian Left.

This approach was at first centered on the plans by the CIA's William Colby, stationed in Rome, to provide covert funding to a potential reform-oriented coalition. This project, code-named "Civic Action," began in 1953, but it was with Ambassador Luce's support that it truly took off two years later. The US ambassador had never trusted the DC's Left wing and soon, concurring with Henry Tasca, she became convinced that this "group of Catholics infected with Marxism," now orchestrating an "opening to the Left" for Pietro Nenni, was likely to introduce "a major shift in [Italy's] foreign policy" as well as economic policies: Under the state-planning projects of the new DC leader Amintore Fanfani, in Luce's opinion, Italy posed the double risk of evoking Fascist corporatism and inadvertently fostering the PCI's aims of economic nationalization. So, the staunchly conservative Luce, while still sympathizing with the Center-Right in Italy, was gradually persuaded that the Center-Left groups (namely, the Social Democratic and Republican Parties) who opposed direct DC-PSI cooperation, might be useful to prevent such deleterious consequences. This also meant strengthening the free trade union movement, a task undertaken by Colby, "building competitive democratic cooperatives and supporting a variety of cultural, civic, and political groups."[75]

Luce's intention was therefore illiberal, but, in its own way, it reflected an increasing flexibility in the US approach to Communist subversion, or to the forces of resistance to American hegemony in general. The American tendency to not only condone but also promote mild dissent in order to neutralize and marginalize those with a clear anti-American agenda produced an interwoven cultural and diplomatic approach to restless allies. In US cultural diplomacy, the main action rested with the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF). The main thrust of this CIA-funded operation was the drafting of intellectuals "sufficiently left wing that they could not be ignored by their fellow intellectuals, yet they rejected both communism and neutralism."[76] The liberal democratic intellectual group of the Vital Center, which had emerged in the postwar period with a reformist as well as determinedly anti-Communist agenda, helped the CCF adjust the intolerant tones of conservative America. Rather than restricting the debate, the Vital Center's main proponent, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., invited toleration of "dangerous opinions." Acknowledging the importance of civil liberties, Schlesinger was ready to admit conflict and contradiction as the truly creative aspects of a free society.[77] The main strength of the CCF thus was its promotion of pluralism to the point of allowing contradictions and open criticism of America. Its main participants were part of what the CIA labeled as the Non-Communist Left (NCL). By admitting the NCL's most vocal demonstrations of independence from American control, the Congress conducted its most effective battle against the fellow-traveling Left

and its appeal among anti-Americans in Europe and the Third World (at least until its connections with the CIA were revealed in 1967). It was in the cultural field that Luce demonstrated the most surprising flexibility. By 1955–1956, she not only restructured the United States Information Service (USIS) office in Rome, reducing Voice of America broadcasts or the use of mass culture in favor of an indirect use of local media and intellectuals (including several "free" trade union leaders); she also helped the USIS sponsor trips and lectures in the United States by, among others, leftist writers Ignazio Silone (also a CCF founding member) and Alberto Moravia, whose views of America remained critical, but always mixed with ambiguous fascination and admiration.[78]

The combined USIS sponsorship and CCF initiatives followed, in the field of culture, a similar purpose as American Labor's "free" unionism: It aimed at the "a-politicization" of European culture. The CCF participants in particular downplayed ideological militancy in favor of a more empirical realism espousing the new trends in (American) social sciences, and following the argument of the "end of ideology" school best popularized by sociologist Daniel Bell. While not succeeding in delegitimizing Marxism, this new cultural diplomacy reinvigorated the aversion to the dogma for many European intellectuals, even among those who had sided with the Communists.[79] Like with American labor policies, the "end of ideology" argument implied a certain dose of American exceptionalism, but one that could be transferred to European culture; for all its apparent pragmatism, it was still idealist, or at least complacent.

But without this modified notion and international practice of American pluralism, one could not fully understand how US anti-Communist policies in Italy evolved toward acceptance and promotion of the Christian Democrats' "opening to the [Socialist] Left" program. With Luce replaced in the Rome embassy by former ECA administrator David Zellerbach at the end of 1956, and the Socialists finally divorced from the PCI, the Eisenhower administration saw increasing opportunities for a flexible approach. The national elections of May 1958, despite the Civic Action program, rewarded not the Left-of-Center parties, but the Christian Democrats and the now autonomous Nenni Socialists while also maintaining the strength of the Communists. Under these circumstances, the Eisenhower administration came to terms with the possible inclusion of the PSI in a government coalition. For CIA director Allen Dulles, the dialogue for a Socialist reunification (between the Nenni and Saragat groups) seemed most promising to isolate the Communists.[80]

It was under the Kennedy administration that Schlesinger could thus facilitate the "opening to the Left." His same general tenets of diversity based on nurturing strong differences of opinion in a free society, as well as his reform agenda, informed his acceptance of the DC-PSI coalition, which ruled Italy until 1968. The coalition of course rested on an advanced reform program. To achieve that, the Kennedy administration used a degree of covert assistance, this time with a better "hidden-hand": The coopting of the Nenni Socialists was done in cooperation with the British Labor Party; opening diplomatic channels with the Vatican, Washington also merged this act of persuasion with that of Pope John XXIII, whose innovation became key in projecting the image of reform

capitalism, the same image the Kennedy administration assumed through its neo-Keynesian approaches. The main financial support to the Socialist Party again came from US trade unions—the United Automobile Workers in particular. In May 1962, Walter Reuther assured Schlesinger that he was ready to "put 'seed money' into this effort if other funds could be available when required"; he also counted on raising money from German trade unions and from the Metal Workers and Transportation Workers; but he warned that the UAW leaders would not "expose themselves" unless the administration was "ready to support" the Socialists "to the bitter end."[81] The role of American labor was thus instrumental but supplementary for an operation that was largely orchestrated in the White House.

* * *

The labor market in Italy again became favorable to productivity by the end of the 1950s, and wages increased 80% during 1958–1964. Italian industry was in many respects "de-provincialized" and, from the late 1950s, the effects of the Italian "economic miracle" became apparent, lowering unemployment and raising consumerism levels.[82] But consumerism had limits in Italy because of permanent low labor costs, and productivity remained lopsided in favor of growth and employment but without a strong labor role, and in favor of large industry but not small businesses.[83]

As for the US role in all this, commenting on the still disappointing Italian opinion polls in 1961 on the country's emerging Center-Left policies, Schlesinger wrote to the president: "The hangover from the Luce period has convinced most Italians that we really favor the big business interests."[84] Aside from the jab at the previous administration, Schlesinger expressed a hard realization: The politics of growth in a low-wage economy confirmed that, in Italy as in most areas of subsequent intervention by American labor's diplomacy, especially in the Third World, the main social problem was not growth, but the rising expectations that accompanied a consumer-oriented economy. The Italian Communists of course waged a frontal attack against such discrepancies in the "economic miracle." Their strategy was a combination of militancy and flexibility toward neo-capitalist trends best exemplified by the Gramsci Institute's studies initiated by moderate leader Giorgio Amendola and party economists Luciano Barca and Eugenio Peggio.[85] Through the 1960s, the PCI restored the CGIL's prominent role among the majority of workers who saw it as the truly independent labor force—an ironic twist of fate for American union leaders who had pressed the CISL and UIL to assume that role. During the "Hot Autumn" strikes of 1969, the CGIL managed to engage the UIL and CISL in a collaboration that was finally formalized in 1973, with the establishment of a federation of federations.[86]

Despite these developments, the PCI remained relatively isolated, even in the heydays of Eurocommunism in the mid-1970s. American labor's diplomacy had many flaws, the most fatal of which were those of inconsistently promoting a pragmatic apolitical trade unionism through a strongly politicized anti-Communist agenda, and believing in the transmission of American pragmatism to unions based on class or confessional identity. The result was increased factionalism rather

than unity in the Italian "free" labor movement. It is also undeniable that structural reform was the main victim of those strategies, abroad as much as at home. But the combined effects of consumerism and, perhaps more important, a flexible, pluralist approach to political, social, and cultural realities in Italy and the rest of Western Europe—best exemplified, in strictly labor terms, by the UAW's role in assisting the transition to the Italian Center-Left government—for all their shortcomings and unfulfilled promises, ultimately did gradually contribute to the erosion of Marxist-oriented class warfare.

Notes

1. On this point, see Kaeten Mistry, "The Dynamics of U.S.-Italian Relations: American Interventionism, and the Role of James C. Dunn," *Ricerche di storia politica* 12 (2009).
2. Sforza in Murphy to Sec. State, April 10, 1944, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [henceforth, FRUS] 1944, III: 1090–91; Ennio Di Nolfo, "The United States and the PCI: The Years of Policy Formation, 1942–1946," in *The Italian Communist Party: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow,* eds., Simon Serfaty and Lawrence Gray (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 38. A few sections of this essay resume arguments presented in Alessandro Brogi, *Confronting America: The Cold War between the United States and the Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).
3. Ad Hoc State-War-Navy Coordinating Cttee. September 6, 1945, FRUS, 1945, IV: 1038; for similar observations, see also Ronald L. Filippelli, *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943–1954* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989), 5.
4. On the importance of UNRRA in Italy see William I. Hitchcock, *The Bitter Road to Freedom: A New History of the Liberation of Europe* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 233–239.
5. Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 99–100; Jeremi Suri, *Liberty's Surest Guardian: American Nation-Building from the Founders to Obama* (New York: Free Press, 2011).
6. Serafino Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967), 20.
7. Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policies* (New York: Random House, 1969); Roy Godson, *American Labor and European Politics: The AFL as a Transnational Force* (New York: Crane Russak, 1976); Philip Taft, *Defending Freedom: American Labor and Foreign Affairs* (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing, 1973); Federico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951.* Trans. Harvey Fergusson II (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 24.
8. Filippelli, 20–32; Vanni Montana, *Amorostico: Testimonianze euro-americane* (Livorno (Italy): U. Bastogi, 1975), 228ff.; for precedents of American labor's financial assistance to anti-Fascist groups (the "Labor Chest"), including Nenni's Socialists, see Geert Van Goethem, *The Amsterdam International: The World of the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), 1913–1945* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 182–186, 197.
9. Ibid., 33.
10. Tel. 2895, Caffery to Sec. State, May 23, 1945, 851.00, Record Group [henceforth, RG] 59, National Archives, College Park, MD [henceforth, NA]; Caffery to Sec. State, January 27, 1946, FRUS, 1946, V: 407; Caffery to Sec. State, April 8, 1946, FRUS, 1946, V: 422–423; Tel. 2402 Kirk (Rome) to Byrnes, August 21, 1945, and des 4352 Key (Rome) to Sec. State, November 22, 1946, 865.00, RG59, NA; cf. Edward Rice-

Maximin, "The United States and the French Left, 1945–1949: The View from the State Department," *Journal of Contemporary History* 19 (1984): 730–733; Charles Maier, "The Two Postwar Eras and the Conditions for Stability in Twentieth Century Europe," *American Historical Review* 86 (1981): 446–447.

11. Maurice Thorez, "S'unir, combattre, travailler," in *Oeuvres de Maurice Thorez* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1950), vol. V, tome 20; Irwin Wall, *French Communism in the Era of Stalin: The Quest for Unity and Integration, 1945–1962* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 35; Stephane Courtois and Marc Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1995), 212–213; Donald Sassoon, *The Strategy of the Italian Communist Party: from the Resistance to the Historic Compromise* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 50–52. "We have to devise a sort of New Deal—Togliatti told the party directorate in July 1946—a program that would enable the party to coordinate the main national economic sectors": Togliatti in Mtg. Direzione, July 29, 1945, Verbali Direzione [henceforth, VD], Archivio Storico del Partito Comunista Italiano, Istituto Gramsci, Rome [henceforth, APCI]; cf. Togliatti in Central Committee, September 18, 1946, Archivio M, APCI.
12. On possible support of PSIUP see Roberto Faenza and Marco Fini, *Gli americani in Italia* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976), 86–88; Nenni's "blinders" in James E. Miller, *The United States and Italy, 1940–1950: The Politics and Diplomacy of Stabilization* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 216.
13. Qtd. in John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy,* 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 43.
14. Philip Cannistraro, "Luigi Antonini and the Italian Anti-Fascist Movement in the United States, 1940–1943," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 5 (1985); Montana, 181–209; Filippelli, 21–32, 66–68, 81–82.
15. Ben Rathbun, *The Point Man. Irving Brown and the Deadly post-1945 Struggle for Europe and Africa* (London: Minerva Press, 1996); Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone: Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spymaster* (New York: Random House, 1999).
16. J.C. Adams, "The Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL)," April 12, 1945, 850.4 Italy (CGIL), RG84, NA.
17. Filippelli, 72–73; Miller, 256.
18. Compare this subtlety to the crudeness of the State Department best demonstrated in November 1946 by the Italian Desk Officer Walter Dowling, who recommended "a policy so damned pro-Italian that even the dumbest wop would sense the drift, and even the cleverest comrade would have trouble denouncing it" (Dowling to H. Freeman Matthews, November 21, 1946, 865.00, RG59, NA).
19. Romualdi, 20–27; Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement*, 41, 45; J. C. Adams reports: "The Communist Party and the Labor Movement in Italy," January 17, 1946, "The Christian Democracy and the Labor Movement," January 5, 1946, 850.4 Italy, b. 10, RG84, NA.
20. Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement* (also with letter by Romualdi), 46–47.
21. W. E. Knight to Mr. William F. Petterson, Director (Bureau of Apprenticeship US Dept. Of Labor), June 24, 1948, 850.4, RG84 (Rome), Entry UD 2780, NA.
22. Pietro Nenni, *Tempo di Guerra Fredda, Diari 1943–1956* (Milan: Sugar, 1981).
23. Cf. Filippelli, 41–43; Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union* Movement, 43.
24. The best summaries of the evolving AFL-CIO relationship are in Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement*, 3–30; Anthony Carew, *Labour under the Marshall Plan* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987); Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998).

25. Romualdi, 272ff.; Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement*, 65–77; Filippelli, 90–106.
26. See FRUS, 1945–1950: *Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*; cf. Trevor Barnes, "The Secret Cold War: The CIA and American Foreign Policy in Europe, 1945–1956, Part 1," *The Historical Journal* 24 (1981): 404–413.
27. J. C. Adams to Sec. State, May 26, 1947, and Adams, "Confidential Labor Report," May–June 1947, 840.5, b. 21, RG84 (Rome), NA.
28. Qtd. Charles Maier, "The Politics of Productivity: Foundation of American International Economic Policy after World War II," *International Organization* 31, (1977): 626; qtd. Caffery to Sec. State, December 20, 1947, FRUS 1947, III: 819–820. On the labor split in France, cf. Stephen Burwood, *American Labour, France and the Politics of Intervention, 1945–1952: Workers and the Cold War* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998); Irwin Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1944–1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 96–113.
29. See especially, Guido Formigoni, *La scelta occidentale della CISL: Giulio Pastore e l'azione sindacale tra guerra fredda e ricostruzione (1947–1951)* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1991), 44–54.
30. Qtd. Maier, 626; Elena Agarossi and Victor Zaslavsky, *Stalin and Togliatti: Italy and the Origins of the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 219.
31. Vanni Montana to Charles E. Bohlen, March 23, 1948, 865.50, RG59, NA; FRUS, 1948, III: 841–847; Filippelli, 133–134.
32. See for example Letter Baldanzi to Truman, June 28, 1948, 811.5043, RG59, NA; on AFL and CIO role in ECA: James B. Carey to Paul Hoffman, June 11, 1948, Elmer Cope Papers, b. 20, f. 3, Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, OH.
33. U.S. Ambassador to Belgium to State, February 11, 1948, 800.5043, RG59, NA; cf. Filippelli, 136 ff.
34. Di Vittorio in Mtg. July 24, 1948, VD, APCI; Dunn to Sec. State, April 22, 1948, 850.4, b. 35, RG84, NA; Dunn to Sec. State, September 9, 1948, 865.5043, RG59, NA; U.S. Policy toward the Non-Communist Labor Movement in Italy, n.d., 850.4, RG84, NA; T. Lane, "Comments on the Italian Labor Situation," December 8, 1948, 865.5043, RG59, NA.
35. Memo for the Sec. State, March 23, 1948, "Policy Memos," Italian Desk Files, RG59, NA; Policy Statement and Background Data on Unification of Italian Non-Communist Trade Unions, November 22, 1949, FRUS, 1949, IV: 710; cf. Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement*, 167.
36. Memo Conv. Knight-Simonini, October 20, 1948, "Labor," Italy Desk Files, RG59, NA.
37. See for example, Letter Irving Brown to Jay Lovestone, July 21, 1949, RG 18–004, Irving Brown Papers, George Meany Memorial Archives [henceforth, GMMA]; cf. Carew "The American Labor Movement," 29.
38. W. B. Knight to Lane, March 6, 1950, Series 350 (Italy), RG84, NA; On these developments, see Maria Eleonora Guasconi, *L'altra faccia della medaglia: guerra psicologica e diplomazia sindacale nelle relazioni Italia-Stati Uniti durante la prima fase della guerra fredda (1947–1955)* (Soveria Mannelli, Catanzaro (Italy): Rubbettino, 1999): 71–74.
39. Rep. no. 3011 Llwellyn Thompson to State Dept., April 12, 1951, 560.1 (CISL), RG84 (Rome), NA.
40. Memo Conv. Michael Ross, James Bonbright et al., October 28, 1951, FRUS, 1951, IV: 729–731; Memo M. Ross, November 1951, RG10–002, Michael Ross File, b. 35, f. 26, GMMA; Charles Bohlen to Homer Byington, April 12, 1952, 865.06, Records of the Policy Planning Staff, RG59, NA; Formigoni, 112–123; Vincenzo Saba and Sergio Zaninelli, *Mario Romani: La cultura al servizio del sindacato nuovo* (Milan: Rusconi, 1996), 135–136.

41. Daniel Horowitz to James Bonbright, December 12, 1951, FRUS, 1951, IV: 751–53; Tel. 1999, Dean Acheson to Rome Emb., February 16, 1952, RG84 (Rome-Confidential), NA; AFL-CIO Joint Declar. on Italian Trade Union Movement, May 14, 1952, George Meany Papers [henceforth, GMP], Coll. 8, b. 53, f. 8, GMMA, and Victor Reuther to Appio Claudio Rocchi, August 4, 1952, RG 18–002, Michael Ross File, b. 35, f. 26, GMMA (both also in Guasconi, 90); Bohlen to Byington, April 12, 1952, cit.; Sergio Turone, *Storia dell'Unione Italiana del Lavoro* (Milan: F. Angeli, 1990), 110–111.
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44. Psychological Strategy Board (henceforth, PSB), Panel C [coordinating the two plans and eventually renamed LENAP Committee], Sub-Committee on Present Actions, "Reduction of Communist Strength and Influence in France and Italy," October 26, 1951, Staff Member and Office Files (henceforth, SMOF), PSB Files, b. 24, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, Independence, MO [henceforth, HSTL]; PSB D-14 [on France], and PSB D-15, "Psychological Operations [..] in Italy – 'Demagnetize'," February 21, 1951, Idem, b. 5 and 7; Scheme of Attack, Panel 'C', September 24, 1951, PSB Recs. box 2, RG59, NA.
45. Memo "French and Italian Elections," July 6, 1951, SMOF, PSB, box 11, HSTL.
46. Qtd. PSB D-29, "An Evaluation of the Psychological Effect of U.S. National Effort in Italy," February 26, 1953, PSB Recs., b. 4, RG59, NA; Mario Del Pero, "American Pressures and Their Containment in Italy During the Ambassadorship of Clare Boothe Luce, 1953–56," *Diplomatic History* 28 (2004): 434.
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55. John L. Harper, *America and the Reconstruction of Italy, 1945–1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 64–68.
56. For applications in Italy see Federico Romero, "Gli Stati Uniti e la modernizzazione del sindacalismo italiano," *Italia Contemporanea* 170 (1988); Luciano Segreto, "Americanizzare o modernizzare l'economia? Progetti americani e risposte italiane negli anni '50 e '60," *Italia Contemporanea* 82 (1996); Sergio Chillé, "Il 'Productivity and Technical Assistance Program' per l'economia italiana (1949–1954): accettazione e resistenze ai progetti statunitensi di rinnovamento al sistema produttivo nazionale," *Annali dell Fondazione Pastore* XII (1993); Carew, *Labour Under the Marshall Plan*, 140.
57. Report by Irving Brown to G. Meany, February 10, 1953, and Goldberg, February 14, 1953, GMP, Office of the President, Coll. 8, b. 57, f. 22 and b. 53, f. 23 respectively, GMMA. Part of the following argument on productivity follows the findings by Guasconi, 155–181.
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59. Rep. no. 5384 Harry Goldberg, September 25, 1953, RG18–003, Jay Lovestone Papers, b. 38, f. 23, GMMA; Vincenzo Saba, *Giulio Pastore sindacalista* (Rome: Edizioni Lavoro, 1984), 306–307; Viglianesi to McAdoo, July 27, 1953, cit.
60. Joe Jacobs to State Dept., November 25, 1953, RG84 (Rome-Confidential), NA; Brown, December 15, 1953, GMP, Office of the President, Coll. 8, b. 7, f. 22, GMMA.
61. François, Bloch-Lainé and Jean Bouvier, *La France restaurée 1944–1954: Dialogue sur le choix d'une modernisation* (Paris: Fayard, 1986); Richard F. Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France. Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 237–249; Bruno Bottiglieri, *La politica economica dell'Italia centrista (1948–1958)* (Milan: Edizioni di Communità, 1984), 107–117; Chiarella Esposito, *America's Feeble Weapon: Funding the Marshall Plan in France and Italy, 1948–50* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 104–119, 178–198.
62. See ECA Mission Chief to Costa, November 1951, ECA-Italy, Office of Director, Subj. Files, 1948–57, "Productivity Drive" sub-file, RG469, NA; Vera Zamagni, "American Influence on the Italian Economy (1948–1958)," and David W. Ellwood, "Italy, Europe and the Cold War: The Politics and Economics of Limited Sovereignty," in *Italy in the Cold War: Politics, Culture and Society, 1948–1958,* eds., Christopher Duggan and Christopher Wagstaff, 83–86, 36–37. (Oxford: Berg, 1995).
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66. Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 376–415 (qtd. 379, 395).
67. Reinhardt to Sec. State, May 13, 1963, NSC Files Italy, b. 120, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA [henceforth, JFKL]; Frederick G. Dutton (Asst. Sec. State) to Sen. Kenneth B. Keating, January 3, 1962, 765.001, RG59, NA.
68. Del Pero, "The United States and 'Psychological Warfare' in Italy," 1330.
69. Ambassador Caffery had for example suggested a similar strategy for France as early as 1946: Caffery to Sec. State, June 22, 1946, 851.00, RG59, NA.
70. On these aspects, see Alessandro Brogi, *A Question of Self-Esteem: The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and Italy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 171–250.
71. Rep. no. 5530 Goldberg to Meany, April 22, 1955, Office of the President, Coll. 8, b. 5, f. 1, GMP, GMMA.
72. Idem; cf. Guasconi, 170–171.
73. Carla Starita, "Problemi dello sviluppo e trasformazione della political sindacale della CGIL degli anni Cinquanta" *Studi Storici* 33 (1992).
74. Cf. Carew, "The American Labor Movement," 40; and for precedents on the CIA's disenchantment with the AFL, Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *"In the Interest of Democracy": The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance Between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2011), 163–175.
75. Qtd. Luce to Dulles, October 10, 1956, 611.65, RG59, NA; Mtg. Luce-Segni, August 24, 1956, 765.00, RG59, NA; William Colby and Peter Forbath, *Honorable Men*: *My Life in the CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978), 108–279 (qtd. 117); qtd. Tasca to Luce, February 18, 1956, Clare Boothe Luce Papers, b. X60, f. "Subject, Memos, Interoffice 1956," Library of Congress; on Fanfani: Luce to C.D. Jackson, September 29, 1954, Jackson Papers, box 70, folder Luce, Henry and Clare (1954), Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, KS [henceforth, DDEL]; Mtg. Engle-Costa, April 26, 1954, 765.00, RG59, NA; Luce to Eisenhower, April 1955, AW, Intl. Series, box 33, folder Italy, DDEL; on "Civic Action" cf. James E. Miller, "Roughhouse Diplomacy: The United States Confronts Italian Communism, 1945–1958," *Storia delle relazioni internazionali* V (1989), 306–309.
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78. Luce to J.F. Dulles, June 15, 1956, JFD Papers, Corr.-Memos, Strictly Confid., b. 2, DDEL; cf. Alessandro Brogi, "Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce and the Evolution of Psychological Warfare in Italy," *Cold War History* 12 (2012); Simona Tobia, *Adverstising America: The United States Information Service in Italy (1945–1956)* (Milan: LED, 2008), 223–280.
79. See Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (New York: Doubleday, 1955); Scott-Smith, 140–153; Pierre Grémion, *Intelligence de l'anticommunisme: le Congrès pour la Libertè de la Culture à Paris, 1950–1975* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), 153–156.
80. Dulles in 394th NSC Mtg., January 22, 1959, Ann Whitman Files, NSC Series, DDEL.

81. Memo Komer to Bundy, April 24, 1962, and Mtg. Schlesinger- W. and V. Reuther, May 28, 1962 Arthur Schlesinger Papers, White House Files, Italy, b. WH12, JFKL; Mtg. Schlesinger, Komer, Tyler, Pieraccini, August 2, 1962, Rome Emb. 1962–1964, b. 8, f. PSI Memos, RG84, NA; In his memoirs Victor Reuther claimed that the AFL-CIO's merged leadership "bitterly opposed any acceptance of Pietro Nenni"; Reuther denied that the UAW proposed any funding operation or "any special program to be undertaken in the trade union field [. . .] we merely recommended that the U.S. cease to put all its eggs in the same basket, and sponsor, instead, a broad coalition that would include Nenni": Victor G. Reuther, *The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), 352. A good synthesis in English of the Opening to the Left and US "indirect" or covert tactics is in Leopoldo Nuti, "The United States, Italy, and the Opening to the Left, 1953–1963," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4 (2002).
82. Qtd. Guasconi, 193. Memo Robert Cabot to Henry Tasca, March 16, 1955, Mission to Italy, Productivity, b. 66, RG469, NA; Segreto, 75–80.
83. Carew, *Labour under the Marshall Plan*, 211–212; Vera Zamagni, "Un'analisi del miracolo economico italiano: nuovi mercati e tecnologia americana," in *L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa*, *1950–1960,* eds., Ennio Di Nolfo, R. Rainero, and B. Vigezzi, (Settimo Milanese (Italy): Marzorati, 1992); Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement*, 91–92.
84. Memo Schlesinger for President (visit Fanfani), June 10, 1961, POF, Countries Files, b. 119A, JFKL.
85. Cf. Vitelli in Mtg. Direz, February 28, 1962 and Barca in Mtg. Direz, January 23, 1964, VD, APCI; on the Gramsci Institute Center for Studies in Political Economy (CESPE) see Albertina Vittoria, *Togliatti e gli intellettuali: Storia dell'Istituto Gramsci negli anni cinquanta e sessanta* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1992), 161–162.
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Chapter Five

The Influence of the American Federation of Labor on the *Force Ouvrière,* 1944–1954

Barrett Dower

The AFL Arrives in France, November 1945

When Irving Brown's plane touched down at Orly airport on the afternoon of November 13, 1945, the AFL had taken a definitive step toward fulfilling the commitment it had made to itself and to its members a year earlier at its annual conference[1] in New Orleans. This meeting gave birth to the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), a small semi-clandestine structure of AFL cadres who would henceforth direct the foreign agenda of the Federation.

Two of the most powerful and productive AFL officials, David Dubinsky and Matthew Woll, were anointed among the leaders of the FTUC. Dubinsky was the president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). He was an influential businessman and a Polish-American politician who maintained close ties with Europe. Woll was the president of an insurance company and the Photo Engravers' Union; he was also an éminence grise, a strategic thinker, and a diplomat. In their strategic positions within the hierarchy of the AFL, these two men were instrumental in establishing, codifying, and promulgating the postwar foreign policy agenda for the AFL and FTUC. There were a few other members of this group who would be responsible for the AFL's exposure in Europe: George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the AFL; Jay Lovestone, former secretary-general of the Communist party of the United States, hired by Dubinsky as the ILGWU's foreign affairs expert; Irving Brown, a member of the Machinists' Union who participated (and was badly beaten) during the automobile strikes in Detroit and Cleveland in 1936–1937. Others included William Green, president of the AFL, and George Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks.

Irving Brown was the ultimate appointment to the FTUC and, unquestionably, the most important: He would be the FTUC's man on the ground in Europe. Brown arrived in Paris at the end of 1945 when the allied victory in Europe was barely six months old. When he arrived, the Parisians were preoccupied with trying

to find food for themselves and pursuing inflexible justice for the "collabos." The unions were purging their ranks: In the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), which almost completely dominated French labor, the Communists were eliminating those who were judged too close to Vichy and were taking control of the union in which they represented two-thirds of the five million members.

We get a sense of Brown's first few days in Paris from his first report to the United States, written to Abe Bluestein, executive director for the Labor League of Human Rights. While the letter is undated, he refers to his November 13 arrival in France and there is an indication in the archives that the letter was received on November 25, 1945. We are given to understand that he has hit the ground running and, in spite of not yet having learned to speak French, he is undaunted by the task before him:

> Arrived Tuesday, November 13, after a delayed flight from Copenhagen. I've begun to get my bearings and lay the groundwork. I've seen some people including Léon Jouhaux and Léon Blum . . . Jouhaux raised the question of a Franco-American trade union committee which would be for the purpose of reciprocal economic relations between our two governments . . . I'm staying at the California Hotel, 16 rue de Berri. It is quite comfortable and reasonable [*sic*] priced. Army provides food and heat (very important) and practically rents the hotel to Americans.[2]

By the end of November, Brown had organized a dinner with those in the CGT who seemed to be the most likely candidates to secede from that organization and who would, in that case, need financial support. Within his first two weeks in France, Brown identified and assembled the nucleus of the group who would lead the scission more than two years later: Léon Jouhaux, Robert Bothereau, Albert Gazier, and Roger Deniau:

> There is no question about their desire to receive our aid and to maintain friendly and working relationships with us. The entire discussion resolved itself into a question of methods and tactics rather than one of principle. How could this be achieved without them laying themselves open to attack by forces on the outside (CP) or by some of their allies within the Resistance Ouvrière group like Saillant and Neumeyer.[3]

By the beginning of the year, Brown had accomplished a substantial part of the FTUC project for France: he had cobbled together a small group of CGT dissidents, those who were disenchanted, purged, or rejected. But the second part of the job was trickier: pull together a team that, while enduring great hardships, would be called upon to oppose its former Communist comrades in a difficult, even hostile political environment. Brown worked with his modest group to attempt a breakthrough during the CGT's annual meeting, April 8–12, 1946, barely six months after his arrival in France. They took a drubbing. The "Unitaires'" (Communists) facile victory gave his opponents the confidence to go after Brown for his interference in their affairs. The amplitude and the violence of the Communist reprisal destabilized Brown to the extent that he left Paris for most of the year and decided to open the proposed AFL office in Brussels rather than in Paris.

The Beginning of the Cold War

A strong case can be made that the Cold War in France began in May the following year when four Communist ministers were dismissed from the Ramadier government. The following month, Secretary of State George Marshall launched the Marshall Plan in his famous speech at Harvard University; in a July meeting in Paris, Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov rejected the Marshall Plan and enjoined the satellite countries to follow suit.[4]

France hesitated before the choice, both public and definitive, sought by the Marshall Plan. Frank Costigliola suggested France's reason for choosing the Western camp: "In the scary days of the early Cold War, France joined the Western camp because it seemed the least horrible alternative. "[5] From a purely pragmatic point of view, it was clear that the war had left Russia moribund and incapable of providing the aid that France urgently needed. The good news was that the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan galvanized the AFL, who discerned in this profession of faith by the US government the reflection of its own credo. This observation marked the beginning of a period of harmonization after years of discord during which the government did not adopt the AFL's anti-Communist strategy. The rapprochement happened quickly since the government realized the importance that the unions might assume in determining social equilibrium and economic conditions in European countries after the war.

Strikes Prefigure the Scission

In 1947, several strikes occurred, increasing in intensity, brutality, and severity as the year unfolded. The April 1947 strike at Renault Billancourt sparked things off. "1,500 workers . . . spurred on by Trotsky elements, go on strike following a secret vote and demand a 10% increase in their hourly wage."[6] Prime Minister Paul Ramadier observed that the strike had spread to 50 percent of the workers and was now being touted by the CGT and the PCF. Furthermore, the four Communist ministers were backing the workers in their bid for a 10 percent increase. The four ministers went too far in their assault on the Ramadier government and were fired for "their gesture of breach of government solidarity."[7] Edward Rice-Maximim comments on the incident: "Hence, until we know better, it now seems that Ramadier conformed to American desires but did not necessarily follow their orders."[8]

The Communists took the eviction of their ministers very badly as they did France's acceptance of the Marshall Plan, which they had opposed so vigorously. According to Georgette Elgey, it was indeed the ousting of the Communist ministers that engendered the crisis and precipitated a three-day general strike in June.[9] The tension remained high through the summer months and prompted an urgent letter from Brown to Lovestone, his immediate superior in the FTUC:

> I think the situation remains urgent enough for us to continue to support the opposition forces. In spite of what may happen in any other part of Europe, for the moment the best of American plans will go for naught if this French situation is not broken. Whatever may be the long run answer to Europe's problems, it is still France

> that must be cracked or else every move we make will be paralyzed in advance. I urge you to meet my latest request.[10]

Beginning shortly after Brown's arrival in France, the question of funds had become an urgent subject of discussion and frustration between Brown and his hierarchy in the United States. In December 1945, Brown had sent a budget request of $100,000 "for the next six months" for his "work with the opposition group . . . I have faith in their possibilities."[11] Three months later, as if he had not made the December request, Brown received a small payment of $2,000 for his personal expenses and $1,000 for assistance to French unions.[12] This parsimonious reaction by the FTUC inhibited Brown's ability to carry out his mission in these early years in France. It also seems counterintuitive to the success of the mission that the FTUC had described for itself.

What were the financial means theoretically available for Brown to realize his mission in Europe? Anthony Carew notes two salient facts: The first is that the FTUC had raised $199,000 by the end of 1945, the first full year of its existence. Of that sum, $108,000 remained uncommitted.[13] The second is that from 1944 to 1947, the FTUC was "sponsored by a minority of AFL unions" and "an annual grant of $35,000 from the AFL."[14]

If the FTUC had the funds, why did they hold out on Brown's requests? There were several factors involved: The first is that Woll and Dubinsky, the principal decision makers, were conscious of the responsibility of the mission they had undertaken on behalf of the AFL and were not persuaded of its ultimate success. Green and Meany both had very limited international experience and counted on their wise counsel. The two éminences grises vacillated, reluctant to commit fully to the project by loosening the purse strings and engaging unequivocally in Europe. Brown, nevertheless, did well with the little he was given during this fallow period. He was a tireless worker, a rapid, albeit Manichean judge of people, and quick to spot their needs. In a mini-portrait of Irving Brown, Annie Lacroix-Riz noted that he "was not content to titillate the anti-Bolshevik feelings of his interlocutors to win them over. He also counted . . . on the seductive power of pure and simple corruption."[15]

The Dénouement

In the first of two meetings of the dissidents on November 8–9, the difficulties were discussed and acknowledged, but Jouhaux pleaded to avoid the break and conduct reform from within. In the second meeting, on November 18–19, there was an overwhelming vote in favor of the break. Jouhaux deferred to the mostly young delegates and agreed to follow them out the door.

In the month of November 1947, the strikes reached their paroxysm. "The government is wondering whether it is still able to impose its authority throughout the country . . . At the end of November, three million workers are on strike. The forces of order are fighting one against fifteen."[16] The strike ended on December 9, 1947. "The workers have had it; those in charge give the order to resume work."[17] It was a fortunate coincidence that, on December 19, the same day as the scission within

the CGT, President Harry Truman submitted to Congress the Marshall Plan bill, "A program for the United States' support for European Recovery." The President requested $6.8 billion for the 15 months beginning April 1, 1948, to June 30, 1949; he then asked for an additional $10.2 billion for the period July 1, 1949, to June 30, 1952, for a total of $17 billion.[18] The initial fallout of the Marshall Plan (or the European Recovery Program [ERP] as it came to be known) was soon palpable in France. Anthony Carew noted: "The availability of ERP credits from spring 1948 onwards helped Western European countries bridge the dollar gap. . . . The immediate threat of communism was thus substantially contained."[19]

The financing of AFL/FTUC international activities changed with the circumstances of the postwar era in Europe. While the sources of the funding changed between 1948 and 1954, the difficulty of procuring records of transactions still obtains. What we do have is access to archives, which yield enough evidence to draw the following conclusions:

1. From 1945 to 1948, financing of the *Force Ouvriére* came largely from the AFL/FTUC and its affiliate unions.
2. From 1948 to 1951, financing of the FO was largely the product of the 5 percent taken from the counterpart fees that the US government retained from the sale of Marshall Plan consumer and capital goods in France.
3. From 1951 to 1954, financing of the FO and the French Confederation of Christian Workers was derived from direct negotiations between the CIA and both the AFL and the CIO (the latter federation only established an office in Paris in the spring of 1951, having been embedded with the WFTU since its inception in 1945; the office was opened and run by Victor Reuther, brother of CIO president Walter Reuther).

As far as the 1945–1948 term was concerned, a January 8, 1946, FTUC document reported:

> $198,974 in contributions and pledges; $10,220 in expenses for banking and administrative charges; $10,000 earmarked for Representative in Europe and a handwritten indication that IB [Irving Brown] has requested $100,000 to prepare for the April 1946 CGT Convention. Anon. [probably Jay Lovestone].[20]

This document is surprising for two reasons: First, when the FTUC was created at the New Orleans Convention in November 1944, it was decided to launch a campaign with member unions to raise $1 million to fill its coffers. The preceding document makes clear that the campaign fell far short of the mark; second, the latter half of the note referring to the "Representative in Europe" suggests that the $10,000 earmarked for Brown is the FTUC's response to his request for $100,000 of a month earlier. Roy Godson, in his estimate of funds at the disposition of the FTUC during this period, makes this comment:

> The FTUC . . . was never able to raise enough money from American unions to achieve all its purposes. From 1945 through 1947, American trade union

> organizations contributed approximately $170,000 to the [FTUC] committee. Over half of this money came from the ILGWU, the Boilermakers, the Hatters, the Machinists, the Pulp and Sulphite Workers, the Teamsters, and the United Mine Workers. In addition, from 1945 through 1947 and, indeed, until 1955, the ILGWU provided the committee with office space and paid the salary of the FTUC executive secretary.[21]

Godson also reminds us that "the AFL itself, in addition to making a $6,200 contribution in 1947, paid the salaries and expenses of [Henry] Rutz [the FTUC representative in Germany] and [Serafino] Romualdi [the FTUC delegate in South America] as well as the international representative [Irving Brown].[22]"

It was undoubtedly through Brown's counsel that the AFL/FTUC targeted three industries in France for special financial attention: mining, communications, and transportation. "As far as can be determined from the FTUC archives, the AFL gave these groups from $11,000 to $20,000 between January 1946 and the CGT scission in December 1947."[23] Ronald Radosh adds an important note concerning a decision by the AFL's International Labor Relations Committee:

> One of the reasons FO was able to organize was because it received heavy financial assistance from the AFL. In October [1947], the AFL leaders in New York agreed to send the FO five thousand dollars every three weeks and to extend their payments into January of 1948.[24]

Anthony Carew summarizes what we know of the financial capacity of the FTUC during this period.

> It seems likely, however, that the FTUC's annual budget was not greater than $125,000, though there have also been suggestions, by no means beyond the bounds of possibility, that Dubinsky placed a similar amount again at Lovestone's disposal. But at least until 1948 funding of FTUC-AFL international activities seems to have been overwhelmingly from union sources.[25]

As the April 1948 meeting of the new federation drew near, Irving Brown made one of many drops that he would make across Europe.

Received 10 Feb 1948 by Irving	272,000 FF*
Received 5 March 1948 by Marcel	170,000 FF
Received 5 March 1948 by Irving	180,000 FF
Received 11 March 1948 by N.	300,000 FF (dockers, marine)
Total	922,000 FF[26]

*For this and subsequent amounts indicated in French Francs, use an average postwar exchange rate of 340 FF= $1.

FO in Search of Its Identity: The Foreign Policy of the USA Begins to Resemble That of the AFL

Although it is not the focus of this study, it is worth pointing out that the exposition, expostulation, and exploitation of the AFL's démarches in France during 1945–1947 were not lost on the Truman administration. It was no secret that the American ambassador to France, Jefferson Caffery, and Irving Brown worked closely together since Brown's arrival in France. Annie Lacroix-Riz suggests that this "collaboration between the United States and the AFL was so close that it was difficult to distinguish one of Brown's speeches from the Ambassador's."[27] Federico Romero noted the apotheosis of this rapprochement: "For the AFL, these developments set in motion by the Truman Doctrine came as repayment for years of intransigent anti-Communist efforts. The basis of its international strategy emerged as the nucleus of the U.S. Government's official policy."[28]

While it is true that the AFL's foreign agenda in France served as a matrix for the elaboration of US policy in this early postwar period, it also needs to be said that the State Department's prescription for France added some flesh to the bones, which would not, in any event, rankle the AFL. Edward Rice-Maximim summarized this policy toward France:

1. The US desired a French policy not even partially oriented toward the Soviet Union and one which would support the American position on Germany.
2. The US wanted a French national economy which would more easily permit American trade and investment and which would be solvent enough to dampen any enthusiasm for a purely left-wing or right-wing government.
3. Politically the US preferred a middle-of-the-road government, anchored on the Socialist Party, which would prevent a civil war and keep either the Communists or the Gaullists from seizing power.[29]

In 1948, the contributions that the FTUC received from member unions were $74,222, of which the two biggest donors were the AFL itself ($12,500) and the ILGWU ($10,000).[30] The total income from all sources was $144,303 and the expenses $117,403. The $144,303 figure included, in addition to the union contributions, $31,502, which was ceded by the Labor League for Human Rights to the FTUC, which became its successor organization.[31] It is also possible that the income included an early contribution from the counterpart funds of the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan Changes the Nature of Financing the French Unions

The year 1949 was critical for the AFL and FO. The CIO liberated itself from the WFTU, and was free to join the newly founded International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU); the CIO was henceforth available to till the labor field in Europe as the AFL had been doing for the previous five years.

If we look briefly at the FTUC contributions to FO in 1949, the difference in volume from the previous year is significant:

- Received from the [American] Federation of Labour [*sic*] the sum of 1,000,000 (one million FF) for the FO Federation of Miners. For the Miners Federation: Morel, February 11, 1949.[32]

- Receipts FO for March 1949:

1 March: Irving Brown	1,500,000 FF
7 March: Irving Brown	1,500,000 FF
17 March: Lillie (Mrs Brown)	250,000 FF
M. J.*	1,800,000 FF
M. J.*	2,600,000 FF
Total	7,650,000 FF[33]

  * Name erased: probably Jerram

- Receipts for May 1949:

2 May: Irving	1,000,000 FF
16 May: railway worker	4,000,000 FF
Total	5,000,000 FF[34]

- Received from Irving, July 7, 1949: 2,500,000 FF[35]
- Received 3,000,000 FF for CGT-FO. R. Bothereau, September 14, 1949.[36]
- Received for building [in Lens] the sum of three million francs (3,000,000 FF). Lens, June 10, 1949. Mailly.[37]

This was also the only year for which I was able to find a budget for the FO. Here are the principal posts and the corresponding expenses for June 1949:

Bureau de Paris (secretariat, administration, propaganda)	1,350,000 FF
Miners (subsidy)	831,000 FF
Assistance to foreigners (immigrant workers)	531,000 FF
Black Africa and North Africa (subsidy to unions)	330,000 FF
Creation of a North African association	400,000 FF
Total	3,442,000 FF[38]

The FO budget above represents a little more than $10,000 per month, or about $125,000 annually.

The FTUC had another good year in 1949. According to Jay Lovestone's figures, the income was $256,895, including $58,403 brought forward from the previous exercise. The expenses amounted to $136,597, yielding a gain of $120,298 for the year.[39] These figures were modified by the auditors to $200,639 and $138,745, reducing the delta to $61,894.[40] Carew observes that the FTUC accounts for 1949 reveal that $47,000, or about 25 percent of the FTUC income, was derived from other than Federation or trade union sources.[41] He also notes,

"A formal relationship between the OPC [Office of Policy Coordination] and the FTUC was discussed in December 1948 and agreed upon in early 1949."[42]

The OPC was part of the State Department at the time, but it operated with CIA funds. Following the agreement with the OPC, one can observe two radical changes in the way the FTUC did business in Europe. First, Brown and Lovestone adopted a primitive code to avoid speaking directly of money: they spoke of a "library" and "books," where a book was $1,000. Second, the amount of the contributions arriving in France is superior to those of preceding years. Marc Behrman cites the OPC's rapidly growing importance as a CIA subsidiary:

> In 1949, OPC's official budget was less than $5 millions. Underneath the public radar, though, the Marshall Plan began funneling tens of millions of dollars to the covert outfit. . . . None of the Marshall Plan funds were vouchered so there is no official record to track how OPC spent them.[43]

How was this sleight-of-hand accomplished? The Marshall Plan donated consumer and capital goods to France (and other participating European countries). These goods were purchased in local currency and 95 percent of the purchase price was surrendered to the participating country for economic reconstruction; the remaining 5 percent was retained by the United States—primarily by the directors of the Economic Cooperation Administration or the CIA—to be used at their discretion.

It is important to remember that the CIA and FO were both born in 1947, albeit of very different parentage. John Lewis Gaddis describes the infancy and the rapid coming of age of the intelligence agency:

> The newly established CIA had neither the capability nor the authority at the time to conduct covert operations, such was the relative innocence of the era. But with the State Department's encouragement it stepped into the breach. . . . The number of CIA employees involved in covert operations grew from 302 in 1949 to 2,812 in 1952 with another 3,142 overseas "contract" personnel.[44]

Thanks to Frank Wisner and other former OSS officials who were now part of the new organization, the CIA learned its lines rapidly. Not only did the Agency fund the activities of Irving Brown and the FO via the FTUC, it also often bypassed the FTUC and went directly to Brown. The cash was, after all, in French Francs. In some of those cases, according to Tony Carew, the money was furnished to Brown by the assistant to the labor attaché, John Philipsborn.[45] I contacted Philipsborn, who told me that he "never passed a franc or cent to any labor leader, but benefitted greatly by knowing them."[46]

We have thus far examined some of the sources used to finance the FO but we have not yet attempted to postulate any conclusions about the influence that the financial support may have evinced. A case in point is the *Free Trade Union News*, the monthly newsletter of the FTUC published in several languages. In 1949, Brown asked André Lafond, a member of the FO hierarchy, to write two articles for the March and June 1949 issues, describing the favorable effects of

the Marshall Plan. Lafond complied. In a piece titled, "French Workers' Faith in Freedom," he wrote:

> The Monnet Plan, which has been adopted by the CGT and, consequently, by the Communists and which is expected to re-establish the national economic equilibrium by 1952 is utopian because it could not be financed without the Marshall Plan.... Among the many causes for the break-up of the CGT, the fundamental differences in regard to the MP were of decisive importance.[47]

Three months later, he added the following comment:

> Without Marshall Plan aid, the textile industry would practically have had to cease operating, the iron and steel industry would have been forced to reduce its production levels considerably, and the manufacturing industries would have been able to work only on a part-time basis.[48]

From these two examples, it would be difficult to posit an ipso facto case of influence. However, two examples from Lafond's private statements reveal ambivalence toward the Marshall Plan. In a letter to Lillie [Mrs Irving] Brown, he wrote:

> there is no question that the employers in general and the agricultural world benefitted greatly from Marshall aid with no effort on their parts to substantially increase their revenues whereas the working class remained with the smallest share.[49]

Two days later, when the FO's executive committee met, Lafond's true perception of the Marshall Plan is reflected in the meeting's minutes: "Lafond judges that the current modalities cannot be maintained because, in its present structure, the Marshall Plan can only benefit big business."[50]

Given Lafond's reservations toward the Marshall Plan, it seems reasonable to assume that Brown persuaded Lafond to write the article, perhaps even offering to assist. Brown had chosen him earlier in the year to head the French delegation of a group of French and Italian trade unionists on a visit to the United States. He was one of those few whom Brown had anointed in the FO, someone he could count on as a spokesman for the federation. Did Brown coach Lafond on the text of the article? Did he make any changes or recommendations? Did Brown translate the text into English? The archives do not yield the answers to these questions.

This incident would seem to be a metaphor for Brown's relationship with the FO and his limited capacity to influence the group in a more significant way. For the readers of the FO journal—including senior officials of the AFL/FTUC and US government policymakers—it would certainly have been more effective to have such articles signed by Jouhaux; it was always important to make the case in Washington for renewed funding of the Marshall Plan. Although Jouhaux was pro-Marshall Plan, his relationship with Brown was distant at best and would have foreclosed the possibility of agreeing to do Brown's bidding.

The Marshall Plan had reached its halfway point in the spring of 1950. A Washington meeting of trade union leaders and senior officials of the Economic

Cooperation Agency appointed a delegation of three trade union leaders to travel to Europe for a mid-term review of the deployment of the Marshall Plan. Their report on France was both direct and negative:

> The fact that the French worker has not received direct and tangible social and economic benefit from the Marshall Plan is the outstanding finding of our six weeks' study tour of the plans' [*sic*] operation in France. Present United States policies have failed miserably to win the loyalty of the French workers to the side of the western democracies and, therefore, are failing to achieve the basic objective of the Marshall Plan in France. There is a crying need for an immediate and drastic change in emphasis in the Plan's operation in France if its excellent and laudable purposes are to be saved.[51]

A meeting with the top officials of the CIA and the AFL/FTUC took place at the end of November 1950. The meeting's alleged purpose was to resolve differences that had arisen between the two organizations; in reality, the CIA told the AFL/FTUC that they would be working henceforth on a project basis as opposed to a retainer, which had previously been the modus operandi under the Marshall Plan.

Six months after the "summit" meeting with the CIA and two weeks after a meeting with Allen Dulles, Jay Lovestone made a vain attempt to seize the offensive in a letter that mostly reveals his arrogance and inability to accept a situation that had changed.

> I want to draw your attention to the fact that it is now two weeks since I last saw you and [CIA agent Frank] Wisner. . . . I want to be very frank with you[:] unless I get an answer and the balance of funds due, I shall be compelled to cable all our field men to return. . . . In order to facilitate reasonably prompt action, I have, under instruction of our committee, decided not [to] burden your friends with any additional projects.[52]

There is a touch of naïveté, if not masochism in the declaration that we are not going to play ball with you if you do not accede to our demands; it is an odd way to address someone whom he hoped would send some work his way. Dulles, probably relieved to have cause to give Lovestone and Brown a brush-off, answered almost immediately:

> As to the future, you will recall that the Director proposed that we should handle the work project by project as we might mutually agree upon each field of useful action. We have noted, however, that under instruction of your Committee, you now desire not to proceed with any additional projects.[53]

Brown had a little more control over his emotions than Lovestone, but he was no less intractable in his political judgments. His intransigent positions on sensitive issues in France were upsetting to many, and certainly vitiated the influence he had hoped to achieve. Ronald Radosh explained the difficulty:

> Brown's call to rehabilitate Vichystes and dismiss Communists, even to take away the CGT's collective bargaining rights alarmed many French laborers. Brown's proposal

> also reflected the extension of American McCarthyism to the European scene. What Brown was demanding was an alliance of the protofascists in order to beat the Communists.[54]

If Brown's vociferous anticommunism toward the PCF and CGT precluded his gaining the confidence he sought with the FO leadership, he also inveighed against French statesmen whom he felt were "soft" on communism, distancing himself from them and generally increasing his influence-abatement coefficient with other political leaders. Both Brown and Lovestone often seemed consumed by the need to do and say things that were inimical to their own best interests. A clear illustration of someone who seemed to present an irresistible target to the slings and arrows of Brown and Lovestone was Pierre Mendès France. Their indictment of him was indiscreet, impolitic, and implacable. A California member of the AFL wrote to Lovestone to ask for further details on the negative portrait that Lovestone had sketched of Mendès France in a radio broadcast. Lovestone responded in an unbridled letter:

> Mr Mendes France not only sabotaged the EDC [European Defense Community] but he did so in a manner which was worthy of cheap Bonapartism—dishonest and unprincipled and anything but straightforward. . . . Mendes-France has surrounded himself with fellow-travelers neutralists and anti-Americans.[55]

Brown and Lovestone not only shared the same doctrine, but they also shared some of the same vocabulary. On October 21, 1954, the day before, Brown wrote to a certain "Mildred" about the French leader: "I insist on my original characterization of Mendes France—a managerial Bonapartiste."[56]

Both Brown and Lovestone cast discredit on themselves by comments such as these, which demonstrated the inability of the two men to shed the sectarianism and sarcasm that seemed to bind them. Their anti-Communist intensity denied the human and political qualities of those they attacked. Worse, however, was that their obsession highlighted the fatal flaws that created the ideological strabismus that distanced them from trade union leaders whose political choices were clearly different but whose social goals were close to their own. It is this shortcoming that inhibited openness, discussion, and patience with Bothereau—and which might have culminated in an understanding or even a level of influence that the AFL could never attain.

An Ultimate Look at Influence

Did the AFL exert an influence on French trade unions during this postwar period? We have a direct reply to that question from one of the leaders of the *Force Ouvrière*, André Bergeron (secretary-general, 1963–1988), who said: "FO provided both moral and financial assistance" to the AFL. Bergeron's reply was cryptic; it answered the question about the nature of the assistance but not the nature of the influence.

Another answer came from Irving Brown himself in a *Time* magazine article in March 1952: "Our job . . . was to be the reinforcing rods in the concrete. Wherever

we could find men who would fight, we had to give them the knowledge that they were not alone."[57]

In trying to analyze the question of influence, it is important to recognize, discount, or disregard those who, for political reasons, have a stake in the verdict. Two obvious candidates are the AFL and the PCF.

On March 13, 1951, George Meany, still AFL secretary-treasurer, delivered a speech to the Catholic Labor Alliance in Chicago. The title was "The Last Five Years," but the subtitle is much more to the point: "How the American Federation of Labor Fights Communism around the World." In the course of this talk, Meany did not shy from taking pride in the role of the AFL in Europe: "It was our leadership in rallying the forces of free trade unionism behind the Marshall Plan which dealt the decisive blow to the Communist attempts to prevent European reconstruction."[58] Less than two years later, Meany had acceded to the presidency of the AFL following the death of William Green. His claims to success in Europe grew bolder: "We have managed to split the Communist CGT and grab 40% of its members."[59] Finally, in June 1953, he made a statement to an Ohio newspaper, creating a leitmotiv, which he would invoke until the end of his term as president: "I am proud to say that we took the money of America's workers and sent it over to France in order to free from Communist domination the workers of France who wanted to be set free."[60]

For very different political reasons, the French Communists also amplified the role of the AFL in the trade union split. On March 11, 1952, an article appeared in *Ouest Matin* signed by Benoît Frachon, secretary-general of the CGT. The article was titled "Money from Abroad," and the subtitle was "Influence Exposed." The article's jubilant tone was evident; Frachon had obtained a copy of a 1950 report by the American secretary of labor in which he mentioned the important, even vital role that the American unions had played in the anti-Communist struggle.

> The assistance of the American unions in the form of office equipment, trucks with loudspeakers, MONEY [the capitals are Frachon's] for the trade union journals were essential to allow the anticommunist workers in France to walk out of the unions dominated by communists and to organize independent trade union federations.

Frachon left his readers with this thought: "If a foreign government pays for a workers' scission in our country, it's because it's the only means he has to impose his will and to weaken the working class . . . like during the Nazi Occupation."[61]

If there existed a possibility of reconciliation between Brown and Jouhaux, it was dashed by Jouhaux's being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1951 and, especially, the subsequent launching of his project, *Démocratie Combattante* (Fighting Democracy). Brown was not necessarily put out by Jouhaux's Nobel Prize, but this award gave Jouhaux the international recognition that encouraged him to present the Fighting Democracy project although it was still in a larval stage. He told Agence France Presse:

> In my speech to the AFL congress in New York, I emphasized the need to organize and coordinate popular efforts in favor of Peace and social progress and I was very pleased to observe the agreement in principle of the urgency of harvesting the efforts of all those of good will throughout the world.[62]

Brown was a very practical and down-to-earth man; Jouhaux was an intellectual—philosophical and theoretical. It was clear that the conceptual terms he used to circumscribe his theory would irritate Brown, even if he were able to suspend the preexisting conditions of enmity between them. Brown went public with his criticism of Fighting Democracy, calling it too vague and neutralist. Jouhaux responded in *Le Monde*.

> M. Léon Jouhaux . . . responds today to the attacks made recently against him by M. Irving Brown. . . . who had expressed his mistrust of "any movement which defends peace in an abstract manner . . . and does not mention specifically the Soviet aggression in Korea." . . . M. Léon Jouhaux judges that this is a "vain, academic discussion," and that the documents published by Fighting Democracy "defend peace, social progress and liberty in a sufficiently 'engaged' manner to eliminate any suspicion in that regard."[63]

Following the line set by Irving Brown, the ICFTU rejected Jouhaux's solicitation for Fighting Democracy. The coup de grâce was delivered by Jay Lovestone in a letter to AFL president Meany.

> As you know, this organization has as its President, Leon Jouhaux; as its political director Henri Laugier who has certainly no revulsions to fellow travelers and Communists. Louis Dolivet is editor-in-chief about whose covert relations with the Communists there has been considerable talk.[64]

If the relationship between Brown and the two leaders of the FO was a distant one, it is not difficult at this stage to understand how that distance occurred. Brown's relations with second-tier management were much better. These cordial relations brought Brown recognition in the form of goodwill gestures, to wit: distribution of *Preuves* to the students in the FO's training sessions [*Preuves* was the CIA's principal organ in French, published in the wake of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin in 1950]; articles for the FTUC magazine written by FO officials, who extolled the virtues of the Marshall Plan or the important role played by the AFL in the organization of free labor unions in France; referrals for Brown or his deputy to different trade union leaders in France. Quenby Hughes summarized this question of influence succinctly:

> Although the Force Ouvrière accepted money from the AFL, the new union was not a puppet of the American union. Lovestone and the FTUC resented the FO's deviation from the AFL line.[65]

What it boiled down to was that Brown was able to procure services in exchange for the AFL's assistance to the FO, but he was never in a position to alter the course of its politics. Several differences, cultural, personal, and political, which we have already observed between Brown and Jouhaux, were responsible for this standoff. Different ambitions and priorities introduced a barrier of mistrust between the two men.

It is possible that these opposing forces might nevertheless have permitted more substantial contributions to the FO from 1946 through April 1948, when the FO

was formally created. It was during this period that the dissidents were in disarray, needy and vulnerable. Jouhaux and Bothereau knew that a rupture meant the risk of failing to meet the cost of independence, to cover their own needs, and to create an identity that would allow them to attract new members.

The CGT scission of December 19, 1947, was not a shot in the dark, however. The FO received a payment from the government for damages incurred by the trade unions, which were outlawed during the war under Vichy's *Charte du Travail*. Moreover, other European trade unions also made contributions. The AFL's assistance was certainly important because it had the means to make a much more substantial contribution, which helped to diminish the FO leaders' worries when it became clear that the break was imminent.

You will recall, for example, that Brown asked for $100,000 in 1946, but received only a fraction of that sum in small installments. The FTUC had more than $100,000 but the leadership was skittish and the moment was lost. Would that $100,000 in 1946 have made a difference in terms of influence? Possibly. But for that to have happened, Brown would have had to have had a less rigid personality; he would have had to accommodate those who did not share his fanatic anticommunism; he would have had to go halfway to meet those whose confidence he sought. That Brown did not was because he could not.

Notes

1. Irving Brown, Letter to Abe Bluestein, n.d. [1945], Dubinsky Collection, 5780/00278/4A, Kheel Center, Cornell University (henceforth, Kheel).
2. Ibid.
3. Irving Brown, Letter to Abe Bluestein, December 2, 1945, 355/26, Lovestone Collection, Hoover Institution (henceforth, Hoover).
4. André Fontaine, *Histoire de la Guerre Froide,* 1 (Paris: Fayard, 1965), 392.
5. Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States: The Cold War Alliance since World War II* (New York: Twayne, 1992), 63.
6. Denis Lefebvre et l'Union départementale FO de la Seine-Saint-Denis, eds., *Dix-neuf décembre 1947: Force Ouvrière,* (Paris: B. Leprince, 1997), 102.
7. Ibid., 110–112.
8. Edward Rice-Maximim, "The United States & the French Left, 1945–1949: The View from the State Department," *Journal of Contemporary History* (1984): 735.
9. Georgette Elgey, *Histoire de la IVe République: La République des Illusions (1945–1951)* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 343.
10. Irving Brown, Letter to Jay Lovestone, August 7, 1947, 698/18, Hoover.
11. Irving Brown, Letter to Matthew Woll, December 14, 1945, Dubinsky Collection, 5780/002/201/3A, Kheel.
12. Abraham Bluestein, "Memorandum of FTUC meeting of March 13, 1946," Jay Lovestone Papers, Box 35, folder 28, George Meany Memorial Archives (henceforth, GMMA).
13. Anthony Carew, *Labour Under the Marshall Plan* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 65.
14. Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Journal of Labor History* 39 (1998): 25.
15. Annie Lacroix-Riz, "Autour d'Irving Brown: le Free Trade Union Committee, le Département d'Etat, et la scission syndicale française, 1944–1947," *Le Mouvement Social* 151 (1990): 109.

16. Elgey, 429.
17. Ibid., 465.
18. Marc Behrman, *The Most Noble Adventure: The Marshall Plan and the Time When America Helped Save Europe* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 139.
19. Carew, *Labour*, 101.
20. "Report of contributions and pledges received by the Free Trade Union Committee," January 8, 1946, 5780/002/78/4A, Kheel.
21. Roy Godson, *American Labor and European Politics: The AFL as a Transnational Force* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976), 46–47.
22. Ibid., 47.
23. Ibid., 117.
24. "Minutes of the November 11, 1947, International Labor Relations Committee of the AFL," cited by Ronald Radosh in *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1969), 320.
25. Carew, *Labour*, 68.
26. Handwritten FO receipt signed by Jerram, March 11, 1948, 452/12, Hoover.
27. Lacroix-Riz, 110.
28. Federico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951*. Trans. Henry Fergusson II (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 91–92.
29. Rice-Maximim, 729–730.
30. Lovestone, "List and amounts of AFL affiliates contributing to FTUC in 1948," n.d., GMMA 18/003 73–74.
31. "Accounting records, Audit records and General activities for the FTUC, 1948," FTUC Papers, Box 257, Hoover.
32. M. Morel, "Received for the National Federation of Miners," February 11, 1949, FO Papers, 452–12, Hoover.
33. Guy Jerram, "Force Ouvrière Revenues for March 1949," FO Papers, 452–12, Hoover.
34. Jerram, "Force Ouvrière Revenues for May 1949," FO Papers, 452–12, Hoover.
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Chapter Six
AFL-CIO Support for Solidarity: Moral, Political, Financial

Eric Chenoweth

Introduction

In response to the most important worker uprising of the twentieth century—the rise of the Solidarity trade union movement in Poland—America's labor movement, the AFL-CIO, carried out an unparalleled and comprehensive campaign of international solidarity and assistance that was essential to Solidarity's survival and ultimate victory over communism. This is not a controversial thesis. Many Solidarity leaders, including Lech Walesa, have said the same thing: Without the AFL-CIO and its president, Lane Kirkland, Solidarity would not have survived martial law.[1] Others can make a similar claim on a more global scale about the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), which coordinated key help to the union. But the ICFTU's campaign relied heavily on the AFL-CIO and certainly no effort by any other national trade union federation compares in scale to its campaign.[2] Even today, the AFL-CIO's leadership, which otherwise shies from the Federation's previous internationalism, cites Poland as a positive example of past AFL-CIO international activity.

Yet, the full scope and meaning of the AFL-CIO's campaign of support has been lost over the past 20 years, not just within labor ranks in the United States but also in Poland, where economic policies have deliberately diminished trade unions.[3] There is hardly anyone in Poland's political class today who knows the importance of the AFL-CIO's or the ICFTU's efforts in helping to reestablish Poland's freedom.[4] The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to describe the scope and diversity of the AFL-CIO's help, the breadth that this support had within the AFL-CIO's ranks, the extent of international cooperation, and the extent of the AFL-CIO's political efforts to maintain international pressure on the Polish regime to relegalize the Solidarity trade union.[5]

The Foundations of the AFL-CIO Policy

The AFL-CIO campaign for Solidarity was rooted in the Federation's history, principles, and long-time support for free trade unions throughout the world, beginning from AFL founder Samuel Gompers (1886–1924). Richard Wilson, former director of organizing for the AFL-CIO and director of special projects for Eastern Europe and the (former) Soviet Union at the Free Trade Union Institute from 1989 to 1994, described labor's international mission as "the ideology of free trade unionism," meaning, "unions independent and free of government control, independent and free of political control, independent and free."[6] This mission included an absolute antipathy to communism and Communist- and especially Soviet-influenced or -dominated trade unions that American labor viewed as anathema to free trade unions and a tangible threat to the international free trade union movement.

The first two presidents of the merged AFL-CIO, George Meany (1955–79) and Lane Kirkland (1979–1995), were both clearly identified politically for their anticommunism. But they made clear that their international policies were based not just on a "negative" struggle against communism but also on a "positive fight for democracy" and free labor.[7] Lane Kirkland, while not differing significantly from Meany, formulated labor's foreign policy slightly differently than his predecessor. Influenced by events in Poland, he constructed a universal framework around the concept of freedom of association that encompassed all of labor's interests. He explained his approach in a speech in 1982:

> While rejecting isolationism, we also reject the unprincipled pursuit of something variously described as "the national interest," or "pragmatism." It was the arguments of "national interest" or "pragmatism" that sped Chamberlain on his flight to Munich; that bred the plot to overthrow Mossadegh in Iran for the sake of big oil; and that inspired other excesses and adventures by the best and the brightest. We argue rather for a doctrine rooted in a universal and enduring proposition—the service of the aspirations of plain working people for freedom, a better life, and a fair share in the fruits of their labor.[8]

Tom Kahn, Kirkland's assistant and later his director of international affairs, put it this way:

> Freedom of association is, in our view, the bedrock human right on which all the others depend for their defense and protection. Without it there is no check on the power of the unelected few to wage war on the many, both within and beyond their borders.[9]

Kirkland insisted that the principle of freedom of association should not just determine labor's foreign policy but also *American* foreign policy; it was the Excalibur that could cut through the impenetrable rock of national interest and trade policy and the false choice between "authoritarian" versus "totalitarian" regimes. In all his speeches on international affairs from this period on, Kirkland argued that a single standard for US conduct in the world be established based on the degree to which governments respected free trade unions.

In a video message to the First Congress of Solidarity in September 1981 (he was denied a visa to attend in person), Kirkland took "labor's gospel" of freedom of association to an even higher level:

> For all who believe in peaceful relations among states, there is no task more urgent than unlinking human rights and freedom from the question of who owns the means of production. Freedom of association, of assembly, and of expression are the indispensable means by which the people of each nation can decide for themselves which forms of social and economic organization are most appropriate to their needs, their traditions, and their aspirations. To the extent that this principle is reflected in the conduct of government, doors will open on broader avenues to peace, to normal intercourse among nations, and to a more just allocation of resources."[10]

This comprehensive philosophy drove the AFL-CIO's policy toward Poland in the 1980s.

The Rise of Solidarity and the AFL-CIO Response

When workers organized scattered strikes in Poland in July 1980, there was very little notice in the Western press or by Western embassies. But the interest of the AFL-CIO's Tom Kahn was piqued immediately. Since 1974, he had been an assistant to the president for international affairs and editor of the International Affairs Department's *Free Trade Union News*. He had also become the AFL-CIO's go-to man in Washington, DC for anti-Communist causes and for getting support for worker-related and dissident groups in the Soviet Bloc.[11]

For Kahn, as well as the AFL-CIO's European representative, Irving Brown, these early strikes in Poland were an important signal that the workers had not given up despite three failed uprisings (in 1956, 1970, and 1976). The personal contacts both men had with Eastern Europeans had led them to conclude that the Soviet Bloc, far from being stable, was a powder keg of worker discontent.[12] Kahn devoted the July issue of the *Free Trade Union News* to the strikes and the history of opposition and workers' protests in Poland. He rushed the issue to print for an increased distribution.[13]

Lane Kirkland also sensed that a major development was occurring. When a second wave of strikes broke out, including at the Gdansk Shipyards, he did not hesitate. On August 20, he held a major press conference—before any outcome could be predicted but early enough to try to influence things positively. He pledged the AFL-CIO's full support for the strike movement and criticized the Carter administration for its silence in the face of a truly momentous event.[14] On August 23, he telegraphed Otto Kersten, general secretary of the ICFTU and general secretary of the International Transport Federation, to encourage joining the International Longshoremen's Association in a boycott against all Polish ships until the Polish government accepted the demand for free trade unions. (The ITF responded positively, a key external pressure on the Polish government during this time.)[15]

On August 31, the Polish government and 21 Interfactory Strike Committees signed the Gdansk Accords, which included a major breakthrough: Polish workers

now had the right to form independent unions. On September 4, a specially convened General Board meeting of all AFL-CIO affiliates—the Federation's highest elected authority—approved the establishment of a Polish Workers' Aid Fund (PWAF) and gave it an initial contribution of $25,000.[16] Lane Kirkland appealed to union leaders not just to contribute but also "to undertake a campaign to raise funds within your organizations."

Prior to the AFL-CIO's action, President Carter and Secretary of State Edmund Muskie had asked Kirkland not to establish the fund out of fear that it would provoke the Soviet Union or the Polish authorities. At a press conference to announce the fund, Kirkland responded publicly to the US government's attempt at behind-the-scenes pressure:

> We are not concerned about governmental policy or government discretion. That is a matter for governments. Our independent policies, positions, and practices are the essence of free trade unionism. . . . In my view, the establishment of a free trade union movement in the state of Poland—far from representing a threat to peace or a threat to the stability of the world or of Europe—ought to serve the cause of peace.[17]

The Solidarity movement carried out the fastest trade union organizing drive in history, reaching ten million members by the end of September. By that time, it knew it had a strong ally in the AFL-CIO that would support it in all important ways—moral, financial, and political. While there were significant messages of solidarity and pledges of support for the Polish workers from the international trade union movement, especially the ICFTU, the AFL-CIO's immediate willingness to raise funds on Solidarity's behalf and its rejection of the Carter administration's timid policy was a particularly important signal.

Tom Kahn was given the assignment of coordinating the PWAF and the AFL-CIO's overall campaign to support Solidarity. During Solidarity's legal existence, the AFL-CIO raised between $250,000 and $300,000 for the PWAF.[18] Contributions ranged from $10,000 (from a number of affiliates) to $1 (from a retired union worker). The campaign reached millions of trade union members through publications and fundraising events. There were approximately 20,000 individual and bundled contributions. Many union federations organized events that yielded several hundred to several thousand dollars, while union stewards raised money at plant gates. Frontlash, the youth arm of the AFL-CIO, organized tables at all regional AFL-CIO events to sell items with the Polish union's famous *Solidarność* symbol and solicit donations. In coordination with the Young Social Democrats, Frontlash organized the Polish Workers Task Force, which had student groups at more than 100 campuses raising funds. Together, the two groups earned more than $50,000 by selling t-shirts, buttons, and bumper stickers.[19]

The AFL-CIO used direct and indirect means to send assistance to Solidarity. In all cases, Solidarity's elected officials and representatives directed where the assistance would go, often in exacting detail—including types of ink, volumes of paper, types of reproduction machines, models of camera—which they conveyed in direct meetings with Kahn in Europe and the United States or through other AFL-CIO officials. They sent $100,000 through the ICFTU (in April and July

1981), which the AFL-CIO had recently rejoined. Most of the support was given to Solidarity in the form of equipment and supplies—including a printing press for producing Solidarity's national publications, and smaller printing presses, duplicators, telexes, cameras, and other supplies for most of its regional offices. The ICFTU made specific transport arrangements in Sweden with the Swedish labor federation's support. Direct support from the AFL-CIO was also sent through similar channels. In many regions where the equipment was delivered, it was safeguarded in expectation of a crackdown.[20]

It should be noted that, unlike other countries discussed in this book, at no time did the AFL-CIO or ICFTU attempt to influence the type or form of Solidarity's trade union organization. The reason for the lack of interference, perhaps, lay in Solidarity's independent origins from any political party, government control, or influence.

Kirkland and Kahn took an avid interest in Polish events and strategies to help the union work to influence US policy.[21] Their goal was to increase pressure on the Soviet Union and the Polish regime to forestall a crackdown by persuading the US government to announce in advance the sanctions that would follow. They said these should include calling in the Polish debt, instituting a grain embargo on the Soviet Union, and imposing a trade and credit embargo on all of the Soviet Bloc. In the view of the AFL-CIO's leaders, if Soviet and Polish officials did not believe strong action would follow, they would not be deterred from cracking down on Solidarity. But neither the Carter nor the Reagan administration was interested in a comprehensive policy. Instead, they only expressed strong (but unspecified) warnings against a Soviet invasion in December 1980 and again in April 1981.[22]

Following those early crises, Kirkland and Kahn came to the conclusion that the Soviet Union was not likely to intervene directly and that it would rather rely on the Polish Communist government to impose a crackdown. This view was based on several considerations: the drain on the Soviet Union from its invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviets' weakening economic conditions, and most importantly, the unique mass nature of the Solidarity movement. Indeed, in Kirkland's and Kahn's view, the lack of a crackdown over time held a real significance: Clearly the Soviet and Polish regimes understood the many problems in organizing a crackdown on a ten-million-member trade union and a national political movement encompassing the vast majority of the population, including one-third of the Communist Party. They concluded that not only should there be clearly articulated disincentives to a crackdown on Solidarity, but also that incentives should be offered to the Polish government not to crack down on Solidarity in an attempt to extend its legal existence as long as possible. While this view was supported by Solidarity leaders, it put them at odds with anti-Communist allies like the neoconservatives, who believed a crackdown was inevitable and anything given to the Polish government before a crackdown would simply provide fuel for the crackdown.[23]

Kirkland and Kahn believed that Solidarity had fundamentally and institutionally changed the anti-Communist equation of the Cold War, requiring a rethinking of traditional foreign policy stances. In their view, what was happening in Poland was no less than the rise of a revolutionary mass movement—with ten million trade union members and the backing of nearly the entire

population—offering hope for peacefully changing the Communist system in Poland and potentially the entire Soviet Bloc. The longer Solidarity was kept alive, the greater the possibility of achieving that end.[24] In December 1980, Tom Kahn elaborated on this view:

> [S]erious American efforts should be directed not merely to frustrating Soviet expansionism but at attacking its roots in the totalitarian structure. . . . I believe our ultimate objective must be the dismantling, by non-nuclear means, of the Communist system. Others may disagree but they are then obliged to describe their own view of the end for which unborn generations are asked to sacrifice . . . It is one thing to tell young people that the road to peace and freedom is arduous and long; it is quite another to suggest that it stretches to nowhere.[25]

Oddly, even within the newly elected hard-line anti-Communist Reagan administration, Kahn found surprisingly weak support. Indeed, despite being provided plans and a timetable for an internal crackdown by a mole in the high command of the Polish military staff, the Reagan administration never developed any policy to try to deter the Polish government or even to warn Solidarity activists. There was only a policy to deter a Soviet invasion, which became much less likely with the growing concentration of power in the hands of General Wojciech Jaruzelski after December 1980.[26]

In Poland, Solidarity and its leadership faced repeated public attacks, attempts at subversion, provocations, and organized violence: a constantly rising increase of political tensions aimed at undermining worker morale in the union. Despite the efforts by the AFL-CIO and other unions to strengthen Solidarity, after 16 months Jaruzelski banned the union when he declared martial law on the night of December 12–13, 1981.[27]

The Imposition of Martial Law and the Underground Period

Despite martial law, the AFL-CIO never lost faith in Solidarity. It maintained, even redoubled, its efforts in support. Immediately, individual unions and AFL-CIO structures at the local, state, and national levels organized or participated in dozens of demonstrations around the United States involving hundreds of thousands of workers, politicians, and public personalities. On January 30, 1982, in response to the ICFTU's call for a day of international solidarity, demonstrations were held in more than 30 cities featuring bipartisan speakers such as Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Kirkland appearing together in Chicago. Affiliates gathered hundreds of thousands of signatures on petitions demanding the release of Lech Walesa and all Solidarity prisoners, which Kirkland delivered personally to the Polish embassy.[28]

Kirkland quickly made a renewed call to support the PWAF. AFL-CIO affiliates and members raised an additional $250,000 through individual contributions and renewed t-shirt and button sales by Frontlash and the Polish Workers Task Force. Thousands of trade unionists and students participated.

Kahn also encouraged affiliates and outside foundations to support the Committee in Support of Solidarity, a group established in New York on

December 14, which quickly became an indispensable means for informing the American public about events in Poland. The Committee documented human rights violations, kept Solidarity in the public eye, and raised funds for Solidarity underground. Over the period of martial law, unions proved to be Solidarity's most steadfast supporters, including money to aid political prisoners and their families.[29]

Over time, maintaining public attention on Solidarity grew harder and harder as the media lost interest. To keep the campaign in the news, the AFL-CIO organized innovative and fun events to keep Washington's focus on Solidarity underground and its need for continued support. In 1983, the union organized an exhibition of underground Solidarity books and publications; in 1984, it sponsored a special showing of the television production of "Squaring the Circle," playwright Tom Stoppard's account of the rise of Solidarity, with Stoppard in attendance at a special Washington screening attended by Speaker of the House Tip O'Neil, Senator Ted Kennedy, and other key elected officials.

Starting in late 1982, the AFL-CIO began lobbying for the creation and continued funding of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Many Democrats were skeptical of the idea, proposed by the Reagan administration, but support from a trusted ally like the AFL-CIO did much to win their support to create the program. The AFL-CIO's efforts convinced many lawmakers of the need for the NED, especially the crucial need to continue support for Solidarity. One of the NED's main tasks throughout its early years was to administer a congressional earmark for Solidarity to be given to the AFL-CIO's Free Trade Union Institute, beginning at $250,000 and growing to $1 million.[30]

The aid was primarily used to help the Solidarity movement reorganize and stabilize itself underground. In July 1982, $100,000 was sent to the ICFTU's Solidarity fund at the request of ICFTU general secretary John Vanderveken. The first priority was humanitarian aid for political prisoners and their families and for Solidarity activists underground; later, aid also went for equipment and financial support.[31] As a result of the increased funds available through the NED, the AFL-CIO stepped up its financial and material support for Solidarity underground to ensure its survival and continued active resistance to martial law.

Lech Walesa and the Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) of Solidarity underground (which was made up of elected Solidarity representatives who had escaped arrest) designated the Coordinating Office Abroad of *NSZZ Solidarność* to represent Solidarity outside Poland. Aid was determined by Solidarity's underground structures as communicated to the Office Abroad. The centralization of aid through the office, which coordinated all assistance with the ICFTU, posed several problems, the most important being that too much went through one channel. The Office Abroad lacked competence at smuggling and suffered a number of confiscations of transports. Printing presses often had secretly installed tracking devices. In one instance, Polish authorities seized a three-truck convoy at the Swedish border, and the government organized a spectacle for television, filling an entire Warsaw football stadium with the contents.[32]

Tom Kahn used this episode as a spur for greater support. "If they seize one transport, we will organize another one, and another one, and another one," he said.[33] But he did not ignore the seizures. While continuing to recognize the authority of the Coordinating Office Abroad as Solidarity's legitimate representative—an absolute requirement of democratic trade union protocol—the AFL-CIO also quietly opened additional channels to Solidarity, including Miroslaw Dominczyk, the former chairman of the Kielce Region of Solidarity, and Irena Lasota, president of the Committee in Support of Solidarity, who had been designated as the Western representative of the Mazowsze Region. The AFL-CIO also encouraged the NED to support humanitarian aid to families of political prisoners and to support organizations and activities by "independent society"—nontrade union initiatives that were part of the overall Solidarity movement.[34]

Altogether, the AFL-CIO distributed approximately $4 million in assistance to Solidarity structures.[35] Even considering the seizures and the idiosyncratically driven nature of the aid program, the AFL-CIO's large-scale support through multiple channels overcame such deficiencies and, by all accounts, played a crucial role, along with assistance by other trade unions, in helping Solidarity survive the repressive years of 1982–1989 and regain its strength in 1988–1989. The aid had an important effect. As underground Solidarity's Wiktor Kulerski later noted, it provided concrete material and financial assistance, but more important, it boosted morale at a time when the knowledge that "we are not alone" made a tremendous difference for a society in deep depression during years of martial law.[36]

International Actions

The AFL-CIO maintained a constant vigil in Washington and worked closely with the ICFTU in distributing aid to Solidarity and coordinating efforts in international fora, especially the International Labor Organization (ILO), to pressure the Polish government and organize common worldwide demonstrations on significant Solidarity anniversaries such as August 31 and December 13.

In 1982 and 1983, AFL-CIO European Representative Irving Brown worked with the ICFTU to press its complaint to the ILO, which resulted in an unprecedented Commission of Inquiry against the Polish government for its violations of international conventions on workers' rights. When the Polish government refused to allow the ILO into Poland, the Commission issued a scathing report in 1983. It was the first successful action against a Communist government within the ILO, and it further isolated the regime in the international community. More importantly, it forced the US and European governments to maintain Solidarity's demand for relegalization as a principal demand for lifting sanctions against Poland.[37] The ICFTU and the Committee in support of Solidarity also worked with the UN Commission on Human Rights and the Bureau of Human Rights, Democracy and Labor to publicize evidence of human rights abuses and to keep in place critical resolutions against the Polish government. This also marked a precedent for this human rights body.[38]

All these efforts to assist Solidarity were brought to the attention of a large proportion of Polish society through Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (and to a lesser extent, other international radios). The AFL-CIO was one of the RFE/RL's chief backers, pushed strongly by Lane Kirkland, who believed strongly in the importance of this communications lifeline to people in Communist countries.

The AFL-CIO, the US Government, and Sanctions

One of the most significant roles that the AFL-CIO played following the imposition of martial law was influencing the Reagan administration's policy toward Poland and the Soviet Union. The AFL-CIO had failed in getting the Carter and Reagan administrations to adopt its policies—incentives not to crack down on Solidarity and clearly articulated disincentives. Indeed, Secretary of State Haig excused his department's weak initial response by claims that it was "caught off guard" (although after the Cold War ended, it was revealed that a highly placed spy had delivered plans for a crackdown to the CIA). "The confusion" caused by the "sudden" imposition of martial law, he said, resulted in the State Department's initial limited reaction of encouraging the "restoration of law and order" and warning "both sides to refrain from violence."[39]

With the imposition of martial law, Kirkland believed that the US government should immediately enact a wide range of punitive actions against Poland and the Soviet Union that had been proposed by the AFL-CIO. In sharp contrast to the State Department's wait-and-see approach, he called for swift and severe sanctions in response to "the state of war" in Poland with the aim of putting maximum economic pressure on Poland and the Soviet Union to end martial law and relegalize Solidarity.[40] The sanctions he advocated included a trade embargo against the entire Soviet Bloc, suspension of aid and credit to the Soviet Union, a transportation boycott of Poland, and calling in the Polish debt, which was already in default (then estimated at more than $25 billion).[41] By tradition, the AFL-CIO and Kirkland believed in the coercive power of economic and political isolation of a country that oppressed the rights of workers, violated internationally recognized human rights, or threatened its neighbors. This position was consistent with the Anti-Nazi Boycott of the 1930s,[42] among other historical examples, and the AFL-CIO had advocated boycotts in such diverse cases as South Africa, Chile, Iran, and the Soviet Union, among others.[43]

Kirkland's view combined moral and economic positions: namely, a belief that economic sanctions were the only nonmilitary means to influence regimes that had become dependent on the United States for trade, aid, and loans. AFL-CIO leaders argued that seeking trade and other advantages with Communist dictatorships through credits and loans—the policy advocated by American businessmen and some Social-Democratic and trade union leaders in Europe—rarely softened the behavior of dictatorships and generally allowed the regimes to purchase more and more sophisticated weapons to use against their own democratic movements. In the circumstances of martial law, Kirkland thought that not introducing severe sanctions on both Poland and the Soviet Union (as the instigator of the crackdown and its ultimate guarantor of success) was tantamount to appeasement and, worse,

actively helped the dictatorship in its repression of Solidarity. In essence, US labor leaders believed it was the equivalent of the West funding Poland's Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Kirkland often called American capitalism "the soft-underbelly of freedom." His favorite example of business's moral neutralism was the policy of Thomas Theobald, vice chairman of Citibank, who famously remarked before martial law, "Who knows which system works best? All we ask is 'Can they pay their bills?'" Kirkland cited many other examples of amorality from the business class, and he could find no example in which a business was willing to take a loss in profit in order to advance freedom.[44]

Oddly, President Reagan was not in synch with the AFL-CIO's strong anti-communism. His first response to martial law was to send a letter to Leonid Brezhnev asking him "to permit" a restoration of human rights in Poland, which Kirkland pointed out "was the first time an American President had accepted the premise of Soviet control over Eastern Europe."[45] On December 18, 1981, four days after the "state of war" was launched in Poland, Reagan invited Kirkland to meet at the White House. Reagan, thinking this was an issue he and the AFL-CIO could agree on, was unprepared when Kirkland voiced his criticism of the administration's "unacceptably weak" policy. Kirkland lobbied for a trade blockade, a cut-off of credit to the Communist Bloc (especially for grain sales to the Soviet Union), and the recall of the Polish debt. Surprisingly, President Reagan repeatedly stated that his possible range of actions was limited by the weakness of the NATO alliance.[46]

On December 23, ten days after the fact, the administration announced mild sanctions against Poland, the most important of which were cancellation of a $100 million credit given earlier that year, suspension of negotiations over the debt, and a ban on air and fishing rights. On December 29, under continuing pressure from the AFL-CIO and others, mild trade sanctions on the Soviet Union were added, with further and stronger action promised if martial law was not rescinded. Only in October 1982, with the formal and definitive act of parliament banning Solidarity, did the administration take one additional action by suspending Poland's Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status.

Kirkland constantly dogged Reagan for his failure to impose the stronger sanctions he had promised on December 29 (and repeated on January 30, 1982, during the "Let Poland Be Poland" spectacle the administration organized). Kirkland charged that "bankers and businessmen" were driving US foreign policy, not anti-Communist principles or commitment to human rights. Kirkland knew that the banking industry had lobbied hard against calling in the Polish debt—the action that he and Kahn thought might have the most effect in pressuring the regime to restore the status quo ante. Instead, in January 1982, less than a month after the imposition of martial law, Reagan ordered that $71 million in losses on already defaulted loans to private banks be covered by the United States, thereby absolving the Polish government from "paying its bills." In Kirkland's view, this allowed the Polish government to stay solvent. Even while suspending MFN later that year, Reagan forgave even more Polish debt in October 1982.[47]

Kirkland and Kahn believed that what was happening in Poland was a clear matter for international intervention based on the regime's violation of internationally accepted human and worker rights. They argued that only by imposing outside—and serious—economic pressure on Poland and the Soviet Union would there be any possibility for changing the Communists' treatment of Solidarity. The soft sanctions policy, on the other hand, they believed would only convince the regimes that even President Reagan did not allow anticommunism to get in the way of business.

Kirkland argued that an immediate foreign policy "reset" was in order:

> If our bankers and farmers have become hostages of the Soviet bloc—the reverse of what detente was supposed to accomplish—should we not move urgently to extricate ourselves from this situation, or should we go down the road to increasing dependence?[48]

One basis for the AFL-CIO's position was their understanding that Solidarity, a mass workers' movement, would be difficult to destroy, an analysis contrary to predictions by most policy makers and observers, who expected Jaruzelski's military "coup" to restore order and stability in Poland,—that is, social submission. Some, including Secretary of State Haig, even gave a sigh of relief that Solidarity had been crushed by an internal crackdown as opposed to Soviet invasion.[49] But all the information that came into the Federation's headquarters seemed to confirm the opposite, namely, that the regime had failed fundamentally in eradicating the union, that workers' allegiance remained strong, and that Solidarity underground structures were being formed throughout the country, often led by prominent leaders who had escaped arrest. The AFL-CIO leadership concluded from the evidence that serious sanctions might succeed.[50]

The State Department argued that a softer approach would lead to better results. Joined by big business and banks, it used every hint of an easing of repression by Jaruzelski to argue for a relaxation of sanctions and the offering of additional credits to the Polish government, including Jaruzelski's. Jaruzelski's "softening" included a partial amnesty for internees in July 1982, the formal lifting of the societal state of war in July 1983 (without any change in repressive legislation), and a cat-and-mouse game of prisoner releases, arrests, and threats in 1984, 1985, and 1986.

Kirkland strongly and loudly disagreed with this policy. In speech after speech, he argued that stifling repression continued and that any weakening of sanctions was counterproductive as long as the Reagan administration's stated conditions for lifting them had not been met, especially the release of *all* political prisoners and the relegalization of Solidarity. In his view, the more that the Jaruzelski regime (and the Soviet Union) believed the sanctions were temporary and that additional credits appeared to be a real possibility, the less likely the Communists were to negotiate with Solidarity. Kirkland believed the idea that additional United States and Western credits would somehow entice the Polish regime to reform after years of brutality was, at best, misguided.

Supported in his position by underground Solidarity structures such as the Temporary Coordinating Commission and groups like the Committee in Support

of Solidarity, Kirkland successfully pressed the administration to keep key sanctions in place until the conditions for a full amnesty and relegalization of Solidarity were met. During this time, although Poland was allowed entry into the IMF, the Paris Club renegotiated Poland's debt, and some other minor sanctions (fishing and transportation rights) were removed, the most important restrictions on trade and credits remained in force.[51]

Although the ultimate pressure that led to Solidarity's legalization and Polish communism's collapse came from inside Poland, thanks to the outbreak of massive worker strikes in 1988, Kirkland believed that the combination of ongoing material and financial support for Solidarity with the maintenance of a basic US sanctions regime that prevented Poland's full reincorporation into the international trade and credit world helped in pressing the government toward the release of political prisoners and negotiations.

The End Game

The strikes of 1988 showed Solidarity's continual and growing strength after seven years of harsh repression. The seven years led directly to the government's negotiation of the Roundtable Agreement with Solidarity in 1989. The most fundamental demand remained relegalization of Solidarity. The Roundtable also contained an agreement for partially contested elections. While the electoral structures were made fuzzy (candidates could run only under the formal name of "Citizens Committees of Lech Walesa"), the stakes were clear. The AFL-CIO immediately provided $100,000 from its general dues for the election campaign. After overwhelmingly winning every contested seat, a Solidarity-led government came to power, effectively toppling the Communist regime.

Lane Kirkland expressed vindication of the AFL-CIO's policies. He pressured the George H.W. Bush administration to provide much greater assistance to Poland than it was proposing, and the Federation continued to provide direct union-to-union and technical assistance to Solidarity.[52] Following 1989, Kirkland fostered free trade unions in the newly free Eastern Bloc countries and contended with doctrinaire free marketeers who sought to impose a new economic dogma on Eastern Europe.

Conclusion

The AFL-CIO's campaign to support Solidarity was a unique example of international labor solidarity. There was no other issue in the postwar period that so united and activated members and their elected leaders. The impact of the Federation's campaign of moral, political, and financial support for Solidarity is evident from the testimony of Solidarity leaders as well as commentary from both the Left and the Right of the American political spectrum. At a time when Left political opinion had a growing antipathy for the AFL-CIO's policies in Central America, the union's combined campaigns in support of Solidarity and the Black free trade union movement in South Africa created a counterbalance that allowed for greater unity and coalescing of views. This was due in part to the AFL-CIO's action to rejoin the

ICFTU after Lane Kirkland became president and the pressure he put on affiliates to play a greater role in their trade secretariats. The effort was aided by ICFTU general secretary John Vanderveken, who assumed office around the same time as Kirkland. Vanderveken welcomed the AFL-CIO's return to the Confederation and encouraged its full participation in ICFTU activities.

This author's view is not unbiased. While working outside the labor movement, my organization had a strong involvement in the AFL-CIO campaign and received funding from a number of AFL-CIO affiliates (although only support for minor expenses from the AFL-CIO itself). However, this paper has been based on an extensive examination of original sources, mostly used for the first time, as well as a reexamination of my own organization's archives and a review of academic and popular literature on this topic. The conclusion remains the same: The campaign to support Solidarity—financially, morally, and politically—was the most significant of many notable postwar AFL-CIO achievements in its international work.

What motivated the AFL-CIO's campaign was as simple and solemn as trade union solidarity. Lane Kirkland said often, "They are our brothers and we must help them." But the motivation was also as complicated as geopolitics: The AFL-CIO's leadership believed that the power of freedom of association could undermine "the totalitarian structure of the Communist system itself" and that, consequently, by weakening the Communist system, Solidarity was "a force for world peace." This became universally clear in 1989, but it had not been evident to many policy makers, intellectuals, or opinion makers. In this regard, the actions of the AFL-CIO had required courage, character, and great principle against an establishment committed to stability and diplomacy. The AFL-CIO's understanding, its diverse actions, and its principled persistence in helping Solidarity from its very beginning should have a prominent place in the annals of Solidarity and the histories of Poland and the United States.

Notes

1. See "Speech of Lech Walesa to the AFL-CIO 1989 Convention," *Proceedings to the 1989 Convention of the AFL-CIO*, published by the AFL-CIO, 124–131. AFL-CIO: Washington, DC, 1989. See also accounts by Solidarity leaders of the importance of AFL-CIO support in Chapter 6, "Solidarity Forever," in Arch Puddington, *Lane Kirkland: Champion of American Labor* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), 163–190. Similar testimonies can be found in the *Committee in Support of Solidarity Reports*; other contemporaneous publications reporting on events in Poland can be found in numerous university libraries and the Polish Institute for Arts and Sciences.
2. See Kim Christiaens, "The ICFTU and the WCL: The International Coordination of Solidarity," in *Solidarity with Solidarity: Western European Trade Unions and the Polish Crisis, 1980–1982*, ed., Idesbald Goddeeris (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010).
3. One example: On June 13, 2013, the Polish parliament approved a law eliminating the eight-hour working day, a right won in 1919 in anticipation of new International Labor Organization conventions. A proposed general strike by the Solidarity trade union to protest government policies has met with renewed calls to restrict the rights to strike and freedom of association.

4. Interviews with historian Pawel Zizak, September 17, 2011, and Irena Lasota, June 6, 2011. Mr. Zizak is author of the definitive biography in Polish of Lech Walesa. He is now working on a paper on the AFL-CIO's support for Poland. Ms. Lasota is a well-known American human rights activist. She left Poland in 1971 after her imprisonment for her role in organizing the 1968 student protests. She was president of the Committee in Support of Solidarity.
5. This paper is an expansion of an earlier and shorter version presented to the "World toward Solidarity Conference," organized by the Institute for National Remembrance, October 21–24, 2010, Wroclaw, Poland. For this paper, the author expanded his research of files at the George Meany Memorial Archives (henceforth, GMMA) to cover this period. While based on documentary history, the paper also relies on the author's first-hand knowledge of events.
6. Richard Wilson interview with the author, August 3, 2011.
7. The phrases are George Meany's but Kirkland used similar language. See Archie Robinson, *George Meany and His Times* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 137, and generally, Lane Kirkland's speeches on international affairs cited below.
8. See "Toward a New Foreign Policy," AFL-CIO Publication no. 185, "Perspectives on Labor and the World" series, 1983. See Publications section and International Affairs Department (henceforth, IAD), GMMA.
9. Testimony to the US Helsinki Commission, Tom Kahn, December 28, 1981, unprocessed individual folder, IAD, GMMA; and unprocessed archives of the Committee in Support of Solidarity (henceforth, CSS), Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (henceforth, IDEE).
10. *Free Trade Union News*, October 1981, Publications series, AFL-CIO, GMMA. Other Kirkland speeches are available in the Publications and Press Releases boxes (processed) at the GMMA.
11. Among other actions, Kahn organized the AFL-CIO's dinner on behalf of Alexander Solzhenitzn in 1975; a cross-country tour for Vladimir Bukovsky in 1977; a prominent exhibition in the AFL-CIO lobby of underground publications from Poland in 1978; as well as getting support for dissident free trade unions in the Soviet Bloc and the Sakharov Hearings in Washington, DC, organized by Freedom House in 1979. See Eric Chenoweth, "The Gallant Warrior: In Memoriam Tom Kahn," *Uncaptive Minds*, 20 (1992): 11; Rachelle Horowitz, "Tom Kahn and the Fight for Democracy: A Political Portrait and Personal Recollection," manuscript, 37–39 (adapted for publication in *Demokratiya* 11 (2007) and found on web site of *Dissent* magazine); and the unprocessed IAD files of Tom Kahn (box 2 of 3) at the GMMA.
12. For Brown's analysis of the region, see, e.g., Letter of July 2, 1976, to Lane Kirkland in which he describes the first statement of the Workers' Defenses Committee (KOR), a group of intellectuals inspired to act to defend workers repressed during the Ursus and Radom strikes of that year. Brown praised the intellectuals' statement, "especially the part which criticizes the lack of real worker representation in Poland, rather than just the economic issues." Unprocessed archives of Tom Kahn, box 1, GMMA. Note: The GMMA has kept an individual box marked Tom Kahn unprocessed files that hold papers from the 1980s. In addition, the author refers to the larger collection of Kahn's files, which were sent to the IAD starting in 1972, when he went to work for the AFL-CIO.
13. *Free Trade Union News*, July 1980. Publications of the IAD, AFL-CIO, Publications Collection, GMMA.
14. AFL-CIO Press Release, August 20, 1980, Publications Series, Press Releases, GMMA. The event was covered by all major newspapers and clippings, which are available in unprocessed IAD and Kahn files.
15. Telegram from Lane Kirkland to Otto Kersten, Unprocessed Papers, Lane Kirkland, GMMA. Letter by ITF to Teddy Gleason, Ibid.

16. The PWAF was undertaken before the union's formal establishment and thus does not include the name Solidarity. It was formally named by all the regional delegates of strike committees on September 17 as the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity (*NSSZ Solidarność*). It was registered only after a major confrontation between the union and the government in late November.
17. AFL-CIO Press Release, September 4, 1980, Publications Series, Press Releases, GMMA.
18. Gregory Domber, relying on IAD records, states $250,000 was raised by November 1981. See "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development: Poland 1980–1989," CDDRL Working Papers, 88 (2008), Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University. The total combined a large number of small contributors as well as large and significant contributions from union affiliates, including several of $10,000. Other contributions came from T-shirt, bumper sticker, and button sales carried out by the Polish Workers Task Force, a project of the youth group Frontlash and the Young Social Democrats. However, Kirkland announced that $250,000 had been raised in June 1981; it is likely that the fund had raised additional monies before martial law.
19. IAD, unprocessed collection, boxes 31–34, GMMA. A collection of folders includes all correspondence and receipts for contributions for the PWAF.
20. Letter to Otto Kersten from Lane Kirkland, July 1981, Unprocessed files, Papers of Lane Kirkland, GMMA, as well as other correspondence in Kirkland's and Kahn's papers (including in processed IAD files). The safeguarding of equipment and preparations made for martial law is known through personal interviews with underground Solidarity activists.
21. Kahn especially maintained constant contact with Solidarity officials and émigrés with knowledge of events in Poland, kept American trade unionists informed of the events in Poland through the *Free Trade Union News*, coordinated activities with the ICFTU, and kept his hand on the pulse of the US government. See January through November 1981 issues of the *Free Trade Union News* for ongoing policy statements. Publications section, GMMA. This section is also based on extensive conversations between the author and Tom Kahn during this period.
22. See, for example, Douglas J. MacEachin, *U.S. Intelligence and the Confrontation in Poland, 1980–81*, (College Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). For the AFL-CIO's demonstrations, see the *Free Trade Union News*, February 1982, IAD, processed collection, box 31, GMMA; unprocessed archives of the CSS, IDEE. In response to the December 1980 threat, the AFL-CIO organized nationwide protests against a Soviet invasion to back Carter's threats.
23. A debate on the topic of how best to aid Solidarity was organized on March 30, 1981, at the Polish Institute for Arts and Sciences by the Committee for the Free World, and League for Industrial Democracy between Tom Kahn and Norman Podhoretz, editor of the neoconservative *Commentary* magazine. The transcript is on file at the Polish Institute for Arts and Sciences and the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe. This author has argued in "The Gallant Warrior: In Memoriam Tom Kahn," *Uncaptive Minds*, 20 (1992), that on December 13, 1981, the debate was decided in Podhoretz's favor, but that in the end, Kahn proved correct that a mass oppositional workers' movement would be the force that "struck at the roots of the totalitarian structure" and created the catalyst for the fall of communism. Notwithstanding the differences in this debate, neoconservatives and the AFL-CIO agreed fully that the Reagan administration reacted weakly to martial law, and both responded by arguing for stronger sanctions.
24. Ibid.; "Debate between Tom Kahn and Norman Podhoretz at the Polish Institute for Arts and Sciences," March 30, 1981.

25. Speech to the 1980 Convention of the Social Democrats, reprinted in *Social Democrat*, December 1980. Also in Tom Kahn's archives, Library of Congress, and the Social Democrats, USA, archives at Duke University.
26. See MacEachin, 211–234. MacEachin notes that the State Department, and administration generally, were "unprepared for the *sudden imposition* of martial law" despite the fact that Ryszard Kuklinski, a high official in the Polish army general staff, had been informing the CIA of such plans for nearly a year. Fearing capture, he escaped Poland in October 1981. General Jaruzelski meanwhile had combined the powers of Communist Party First Secretary, Prime Minister, Defense Minister, and chairman and vice chairman of the highest national security bodies, indicating the Soviet Union's high degree of trust in him to "end" the crisis. Jaruzelski wrote in his memoirs that, given the knowledge of Kuklinski providing details of martial law, the fact that the United States did nothing was seen as tacit US acceptance of an internal crackdown as a preferred outcome. MacEachin, a retired Deputy Chief for Intelligence, concludes that US officials overlooked the consequences of Kuklinski's exit, and many other events pointing to the impending internal crackdown.
27. For accounts of the Polish crisis in August–December 1981, and the government's increasingly provocative behavior toward Solidarity, see *Daily Reports* of the RFE/RL and Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (New York: Scribner, 1984).
28. Ongoing protests against martial law and in support of Solidarity are reported in the *AFL-CIO News*, the *Free Trade Union News*, and in AFL-CIO press releases from December 14 to August 31, 1982, the second anniversary of the Gdansk Accords. Events organized in Poland on anniversaries of the imposition of martial law (December 13) and the Gdansk Accords still attracted thousands of unionists through 1984. See Information Department and Publications Series, GMMA.
29. Office of the President, American Federation of Teachers (henceforth, AFT), Walter Reuther Library (henceforth, WRL), Wayne State University, files 52.44–45 and 53.1–4, boxes 52 and 53. See also AFT archives, IAD, WRL, box 7, File 14 for its ongoing Adopt-Family campaign; and "Trade Union Support" folder, box 1, CSS, IDEE.
30. National Endowment for Democracy archives are at the LOC. Kahn and Free Trade Union Institute unprocessed files, IAD, GMMA.
31. The unprocessed archives of Lane Kirkland include a letter from Irving Brown to Kirkland recommending that the AFL-CIO respond positively to the request of John Vandervecken for contributions to the Solidarity Fund. Kirkland and Brown both viewed the contribution as a means to solidify renewed international trade union unity following the AFL-CIO's rejoining of the ICFTU at Kirkland's initiative. There are two additional contributions to Solidarity, one before martial law and one afterward, totaling $150,000. Lane Kirkland, Unprocessed, Country Files: Poland 1981–1988, GMMA.
32. The author was in Poland at the time, meeting with a member of the Solidarity Regional Coordinating Commission of Mazowsze. I was crestfallen as he turned on the television news report, which clearly aimed to demonstrate the full power of the state and demoralize Solidarity activists. Showing that anything can be turned into a positive, he told me, "It doesn't matter. This shows society how much the West supports us."
33. Conversation with the author and Speech to International Affairs Regional Conferences in Tom Kahn, box 1, unprocessed files, GMMA; see also Kahn Files, LOC.
34. See the unprocessed archives of Kahn, box 1, IAD, GMMA, for correspondence with the Coordinating Office as well as the unprocessed archives of the CSS, IDEE. The author traveled to Poland as director of the Committee in Support of Solidarity.
35. This figure is the usual amount cited for total support to Solidarity by the AFL-CIO; see, for example, Puddington; Gregory Domber, "Supporting the Revolution: America, Democracy, and the End of the Cold War" (PhD diss, George Washington University,

2008). When considering overall support for the Polish freedom movement combined with the AFL-CIO's efforts for a broad range of underground initiatives, this figure is understated.

36. See interview with Wiktor Kulerski in *Committee in Support of Solidarity Reports*, 50 (1988), as well as previous interviews and articles in the same publication.
37. Eugenia Kemble, "Victory for Free Labor at the ILO," *Free Trade Union News*, August 1982, August 1983, and August 1984, Publication Series, GMMA; ILO press releases, July 1983 (including an exchange of letters between the Polish Government and Francois Blanchard); Christiaens in Goddeeris.
38. CSS archives.
39. MacEachin.
40. Formally, Jaruzelski invoked the constitutional provision for emergency measures in the event the state was being attacked, *stan wojeny* in Polish, or "state of war." Of course, in this instance, the Polish population was the "external danger" against whom war was waged. This has been rendered as "martial law" in most contemporary and historical accounts.
41. Statement of AFL-CIO, December 14, Publications Section, GMMA.
42. The boycott was initiated by the Jewish Labor Committee formed in 1934 by, among others, David Dubinsky and the United Hebrew Trades. JLC delegates convinced the AFL-CIO convention to adopt the boycott more broadly. See History of the Jewish Labor Committee, Wikipedia.
43. Publications Section, Resolutions of the AFL-CIO Executive Council and Conventions, GMMA. See also unprocessed IAD files.
44. See "Toward a New Foreign Policy," AFL-CIO Publication no. 185, IAD, 1983, Publications and IAD sections, GMMA. See also Kirkland, "The Widening Gap between Words and Deeds," *Free Trade Union News*, March 1982 (reprinted from the *Washington Post*, February 24, 1982).
45. For a description of the letter, see Domber, "Supporting the Revolution." Kirkland's comment was made in a speech at the Waldorf-Astoria on April 3 to the Foreign Policy Association. See Information and Publications Archive, GMMA.
46. Robert Bonitati Files, box 10, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, written notes of meeting between Ronald Reagan and Lane Kirkland, December 18, 1981. See also Diary of Ronald Reagan, www.reaganfoundation.org/white-house-diary.aspx, December 21, 1981, where he expresses different sentiments.
47. Kirkland, "The Widening Gap."
48. Ibid.
49. MacEachin. See also Alexander Haig, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), chap. 20.
50. See the series of speeches on Poland and freedom of association, especially from 1982, in the unprocessed Kirkland and IAD collections and the processed Publications section, GMMA.
51. See unprocessed Kirkland collection, country files: Poland; IAD collection, especially Tom Kahn files, Poland folders, GMMA.
52. Testimony of Lane Kirkland to the US Congress.

Part III

On a Mission: American Labor's Ambassadors in Latin America and the Caribbean

Chapter Seven

Reforming Latin American Labor: The AFL-CIO and Latin America's Cold War

Dustin Walcher

In January 1947, Serafino Romualdi led an American Federation of Labor (AFL) delegation to Buenos Aires. Assigned to Latin America as the AFL's regional representative that year, Romualdi sought to foster an ideology of liberal labor internationalism that called for the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively for labor independence from the state, and for the defense of private property rights. An Italian immigrant who had fled Mussolini's Italy, he fiercely opposed both Fascism and communism, but found the specter of such "totalitarian" ideologies lurking under the surface of existing international labor organizations (most notably the World Federation of Trade Unions, WFTU). Furthermore, he believed that freedom was synonymous with liberalism and that formal ties between labor and the state served to erode freedom. Romualdi spoke fluent Spanish, traveled frequently throughout Latin America, and enjoyed substantial high-level contacts with the region's political and trade union leaders. He was, in other words, uniquely suited to the job. Through Romualdi's efforts, the AFL—and after 1955 the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations)—became active in efforts to liberalize Latin America's trade union movements even before the US government provided a systemic commitment to such efforts.[1]

Although any comprehensive list of people, organizations, and ideas Romualdi disliked would necessarily be quite long, he particularly loathed Argentine president Juan Perón. He publicly accused Perón of harboring Nazi sympathies and suggested that the president's political support from the Argentine working class was inauthentic and overstated. Rather than an opportunity for organized labor fraternization across national borders, Romualdi accepted an invitation from the Argentine *Confederación General del Trabajo* (General Confederation of Labor, CGT) to visit the country so US labor leaders could "conduct [their] own survey" of "the actual trade union and economic conditions that exist in [Argentina]." It was, in other words, an inspection tour.[2]

Unsurprisingly, Perón bristled at any suggestion that he should prostrate himself before American trade unionists. Argentine nationalism was a powerful force and Perón wielded it adeptly. He had won the 1946 presidential election in part by casting the choice as one between himself and US Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs Spruille Braden, who had previously served as ambassador to Argentina and had taken a vocal public stance against Perón's candidacy. Braden's interference backfired; rather than convince Argentine voters that Perón was an extremist and a threat, he instead unwittingly played into the colonel's nationalist message. Perón offered one variety of a "third way" between communism and capitalism that envisioned the ultimate creation of a heavily centralized, statist corporatist order characterized by considerable state intervention in the economy, centralized control of economic resources, and Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI). Unlike the statist corporatism that marked European Fascist regimes, Perón adopted a populist program that, for the first time, celebrated the Argentine working class. Under the Peronist state, workers were integrated into the CGT, which in turn served as a pillar of the regime's authority. Indeed, Perón was the first president to integrate working-class Argentines into a broader conception of the nation, and *peronismo* subsequently enjoyed widespread popularity among their ranks. From the new president's standpoint, Romualdi's intrigue with trade union leaders threatened Argentine sovereignty. For his part, Romualdi saw only Fascism. Meetings between Perón and the AFL delegation were predictably disastrous. Perón and his allies complained that the AFL was "imperialistic" because it sought "to orientate and direct the labor movement." Romualdi countered that the Argentine labor movement had been co-opted by the Peronist state and thus had compromised its ability to articulate independently working-class interests. When the AFL delegation departed from Buenos Aires, superheated recriminations flew in all directions. Romualdi did not return to Argentina until 1956, the year after the Argentine military's "Liberating Revolution" removed Perón from power. Because of the vast ideological chasm between Peronism and liberalism, and the continued appeal of Peronist ideology to the Argentine working class, American trade unionists were frustrated in their efforts to transform the CGT into the Argentine incarnation of the AFL-CIO, even in the years after Perón took up residence in exile.[3]

This chapter analyzes the ideological and structural roots of the AFL/AFL-CIO's policy of promoting American-style liberal trade unionism throughout Latin America during the first decades of the Cold War. Even before the end of World War II, AFL leaders had sought to homogenize international labor on the basis of the American model. AFL leaders such as Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown were confident that the model of political economy that emerged in the United States during the 1930s was universally applicable. While US labor leaders demonstrated their desire to spread the gospel of liberal trade unionism as a matter of principle, the emergence of the Cold War added urgency to the task and provided additional impetus for labor–government cooperation in the face of the perceived Soviet threat to American values and strategic interests. In response, labor leaders partnered with both the US government and business leaders who had interests

in the hemisphere. In international affairs, there was general consensus between these groups on the need to contain communism and other totalitarian ideologies, although they sometimes differed on tactics. But as they went abroad, they encountered an ideologically diverse labor environment that included Marxists, Christian trade unionists, statist corporatists, and liberals. Convincing the majority of Latin American workers that the American model offered them better prospects than its rivals proved to be a difficult task—and one in which American labor could count few clear-cut, sustainable victories.

Recent studies have added significantly to our understanding of the Cold War's dynamics in Latin America. However, even as scholarly attention moves beyond the conflict's hot spots and increasingly focuses on the intersection between social, political, and economic history, the role of labor remains underdeveloped. Disputes over wages, the workplace, and of perhaps the greatest significance to readers of this volume, the manner in which workers were integrated into the larger political economy, took on increasing international significance. This chapter briefly sketches some of the underlying issues involved in labor's Cold War in the Western Hemisphere while those that follow, by Magaly Rodríguez García, Robert Waters, Larissa Rosa Corrêa, and Angela Vergara offer detailed case studies.[4]

* * *

The ideological orientation of US labor leaders was a product of the country's historical experience. Like parts of Latin America, most notably the Rio de la Plata and urban centers generally, the United States was a major destination point for European immigrants during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the first decade of the twentieth century alone, more than eight million immigrants arrived in the United States. Those new arrivals, increasingly from southern and eastern Europe, comprised more than 10 percent of the overall US population in 1910. They also constituted the backbone of the nation's unskilled industrial workforce. Compared with Latin America, the range of employment opportunities was somewhat broader in the United States because the country boasted of a large and expanding manufacturing sector alongside the primary and tertiary sectors. However, throughout the hemisphere, jobs available to immigrants typically called for long hours of hard labor, while any sense of economic security proved fleeting. Both North and South America also offered many immigrants more than the places they left behind, explaining the robust immigration that continued until World War I interrupted Atlantic crossings.[5]

The United States was relatively successful at formally integrating immigrants into the political economy. The path toward citizenship was open. Urban political machines in particular had a vested interest in organizing new arrivals into a coherent voting bloc. Doing so required that immigrants become citizens. Although political leaders were slow to take up issues of particular concern to immigrants or the working class more broadly, American workers did enjoy voting rights. They were integrated, albeit inequitably, into political society. State

intervention on a neutral, let alone a pro-labor basis in disputes between labor and capital remained rare, despite the Progressive Era's preoccupation with the question of monopoly.

The New Deal of the 1930s altered the relationship between labor, capital, and the state. The Wagner Act, which passed in 1935 despite President Franklin Roosevelt's personal reservations, guaranteed organized labor collective bargaining rights. The gain was tremendous. By the time conservatives passed the Taft–Hartley Act in 1947 in an effort to contain labor's gains, the secondary sector had already effectively unionized. Through collective bargaining, organized labor won higher wages, shorter hours, better working conditions, more benefits, and severe limitations on the arbitrary powers that shop floor supervisors had been able to wield over their underlings. Combined with increased labor activism led by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the results largely conformed to United Mine Workers president John L. Lewis's vision of a middle-class existence for blue-collar workers. Approximately one-third of American workers were union members during the 1950s, a period that coincided with widespread economic affluence. Despite the persistence of poverty that Michael Harrington famously identified, on balance white Americans enjoyed unprecedented levels of prosperity during the two decades following World War II. From labor's standpoint, American workers could thank New Deal liberalism for their improved socioeconomic status. They in turn rewarded Democratic candidates with their votes and remained a bedrock component of the New Deal political coalition until it broke under the pressure of Vietnam.[6]

They also helped redefine the US political economy. The system that resulted from the New Deal's various reforms, termed corporative neocapitalism by historian Michael J. Hogan, was "founded on self-governing economic groups, integrated by institutional coordinators and normal market mechanisms, led by cooperating public and private elites, nourished by limited but positive government power, and geared to an economic growth in which all could share." Organized labor constituted one self-governing economic group within the larger structure—a momentous change in status. However, labor did not challenge business for primacy among private functional interest groups in the US political economy. Although business was forced to acknowledge and negotiate with labor, it retained the "right to manage." And both business and labor retained their autonomy. Even the Taft–Hartley Act did not bring back the employer-controlled unions that had emerged in the early 1930s. Nor was organized labor formally integrated into the state. By the 1950s, American functional elites identified their liberal system of corporative neocapitalism as the very definition of a modern political economy.[7]

AFL/AFL-CIO foreign affairs leaders were the products of this historical experience. In their eyes, the United States generally, and American workers specifically, had weathered the Great Depression and World War II, and had come out ahead. The new American variety of liberalism worked. Most American workers enjoyed the benefits of high mass consumption, to the point that Richard Nixon could trumpet the triumph of consumerism in his famous 1959 kitchen debate with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev. By contrast, communism and Fascism had been thoroughly discredited in the United States as a result of World War II

and the Red Scare. Consequently, the AFL/AFL-CIO's officials went abroad as true believers in American liberalism. Moreover, they held their model to be universally applicable; any country in the world could, and should, build the same basic structure. Indeed, given that from the AFL/AFL-CIO's point of view the only viable alternatives were totalitarian, the well-being of humanity, to say nothing of US national interests, demanded that countries adopt the US framework. Like the Cold War itself, labor's Cold War in Latin America was a battle "for the soul of mankind."[8]

With the advent of the Cold War, confronting the geostrategic, economic, and ideological challenge of Soviet communism became a central organizing principle of US foreign policy. Like business and political leaders, most US labor officials—particularly those associated with the AFL—adopted an uncompromisingly anti-Communist position at home and abroad. Domestically, labor leaders purged Communists from those unions—generally associated with the CIO—where they had enjoyed influence. While Europe provided the first opportunity to showcase labor–government cooperation in the pursuit of mutual objectives abroad through the Marshall Plan, by the 1950s the Global South had emerged as the Cold War's central ideological battleground. As decolonization proceeded and the existing countries clamored to industrialize and enhance their prospects for economic development, successful resolution of the labor question emerged as a priority. The working class often supported more state involvement in the economy than US officials were comfortable with. Consequently, by co-opting significant segments of labor and addressing some of their core concerns with liberal solutions, some of the most organized and aggravated potential opponents of US policy could be neutered.[9]

As the Cold War developed, and the contest between different political and economic systems took center stage in the Global South, modernization theory began to emerge as a critical framework helping to guide policymakers as early as the 1950s. To articulate the virtues of liberal capitalism in response to the Communist challenge, a group of American social scientists advanced this liberal theory of social, political, and economic development. Modernization theory posited that, contrary to Communist ideology, a "high mass consumption society" represented the ultimate stage of social development. "Traditional" societies, generally located in the Global South, each possessed the ability to transition through various stages of development into "high mass consumption" societies. From the perspective of the theory's practitioners, the United States embodied the liberal modernity of high mass consumption. Before "traditional" societies could become "modern high mass consumption" societies, they needed to pass through a common series of stages of growth. Modernization theory was rooted in a social scientific belief that the ideologically divisive political and economic problem of development really constituted a series of technical problems that could be solved objectively. Although rooted in modern liberal ideology, modernization theorists saw their work as objective, scientific, and nonideological. W. W. Rostow brought the theory to the attention of policymakers in his capacity as an informal adviser to the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration, and then as a high-ranking official in the John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson administrations. He and other

elites held a quasi-religious faith in their own ability to affect positively the livelihoods of millions of diverse people around the world while at the same time exposing Communist modernity as a false idol.[10]

The rise of modernization theory did not fundamentally change the AFL-CIO's outlook; for generations, AFL leaders had endorsed a liberal labor framework as a universal model. However, by 1957, the AFL-CIO officials had adopted the discourse of modernization for their own use. It had its advantages. Historian Michael Latham argues convincingly that modernization constituted a social scientific theory offering American elites "much more than an academic model." It served as "a means of understanding the process of global change and identifying ways the United States could accelerate, channel, and direct it" in a liberal direction. To the "action intellectuals" of the mid-twentieth century, who feared that the Soviets had taken the initiative in the Cold War by offering socioeconomic improvement to the less economically developed world, modernization theory offered a response. Significantly, modernization theorists paid relatively little attention to the role of organized labor in their own academic work. Nevertheless, their framework proved compatible with the existing AFL-CIO ideology and international objectives.[11]

The AFL-CIO clearly outlined its ideals for Latin America's liberal modernization in its December 1957 Statement on Inter-American Affairs. Illustrating the union's vision for labor within the hemisphere, the document read:

> Drawing from the experiences of our own labor movement and the economic development of our country, we have steadfastly urged for Latin America, as well as for the underdeveloped countries of the rest of the world, a policy of economic expansion based primarily on the increasing purchasing power of the people. The economic difficulties at present experienced by so many Latin American countries stem precisely from the failure to extend to the great masses of agricultural, mining and industrial workers a fair share of the benefits gained by the land owners, local industrial concerns, and foreign investors.
>
> On the other hand, Latin American countries—along with those in other underdeveloped areas—need capital and technical assistance from abroad for the modernization of their productive capacities and the diversification of their economies. A great part of this needed capital can be furnished by private investors[12]

The statement went on to note that Latin America could not develop economically without external government financial assistance from sources such as the World Bank, the Export-Import Bank, and US public financing. The AFL-CIO explicitly endorsed the diffusion of economic resources and technical knowledge from the United States to Latin American nations. At the 1957 Inter-American Economic Conference in Buenos Aires, to the delight of American union leaders, the Eisenhower administration adopted the principle that the US government should take a leading role in disseminating modernity to the underdeveloped world although it did not craft policies to do so until 1959. Like contemporary modernization theorists in the social sciences, the AFL-CIO's leadership advocated a strenuous American effort to spread economic liberalism throughout the less developed world and lobbied policymakers to make and follow through on

technical and financial commitments necessary to achieve that objective. They possessed great faith in the ability of the United States to bring transformative change. The AFL-CIO firmly endorsed the principles of consumerism and private enterprise, each of which could be enhanced by the transmission of technical knowledge abroad.[13]

Also like modernization theorists, the AFL-CIO leaders believed that their principles were under attack by communism and other totalitarian ideologies, particularly in the Global South. Noting Latin America's poverty, high rates of inflation, and economic instability, the AFL-CIO explained that "the Communists are exploiting legitimate economic grievances in order to infiltrate and gain control of the unions." American unionists further worried that "popular front tactics revived by the Communists, [are] now parading under the cloak of democracy and progressivism." Given a worldview in which Communists sought to advance their agenda as a consequence of worker disenchantment and national economic maladjustment, liberal labor had an important role to play in the modernization process overseas. The Statement on Inter-American Affairs observed that the International Confederation of Free Trade Union's (ICFTU) Western Hemisphere affiliate, the *Organización Regional Interamericano de Trabajadores* (Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers, ORIT), must play a leading role in the process of Latin American development to ensure the triumph of economic liberalism within influential Latin American labor unions. They sought to "assert with renewed vigor that a truly democratic labor movement must be uncompromisingly opposed to the Communists as well as the Fascists and every other brand of totalitarianism." The idea of democracy was thus an important part of the modernization program from the perspective of labor elites, who encouraged the US government to support regional governments that were committed to "the democratic way of life." However, in practice, they defined democracy by outcomes instead of by process. The existence of free elections was not sufficient to constitute a democratic framework; those elections needed to result in the election of candidates representing positions along the liberal spectrum. A democratic system, by definition, could not elect a Peronist or a Marxist. Governed by such reasoning, the AFL-CIO leadership denounced the elected governments of Perón in Argentina and Cheddi Jagan in British Guiana as undemocratic.[14]

* * *

It fell to Romualdi to translate these principles into results throughout the Western Hemisphere. While he forged connections with like-minded labor leaders throughout the region, he employed the discourse of corporative neocapitalism prevalent in the United States, declaring, "The old concept of confining organized labor's role to matters pertaining to wages and working conditions and, above all, fighting the employer, is being supplanted by the new concept of labor as a full-fledged partner in a national society." Romualdi went on to argue that as a partner, organized labor was "able to work constructively with the government as well as with the employer, offering to both of them his own contribution toward making social and economic progress feasible and attainable."[15]

Partnership with government was one thing when a Democratic labor ally occupied the presidency—even one such as Truman who did not perceive significant threats in Latin America and who consequently spent little money on the region. However, in 1953, Dwight D. Eisenhower became the only Republican to reside in the White House during the middle third of the twentieth century. The budget-conscious moderate was uninterested in undertaking any major new initiatives in Latin America until late in his presidency, agreeing with Truman that the region was not under imminent threat from Communist expansion. Moreover, he held that "trade not aid" offered the best means of facilitating socioeconomic improvement in the region. However, Vice President Richard Nixon's ill-fated 1958 tour of the region, during which he faced violent demonstrations, combined with the 1959 triumph of the Cuban Revolution, convinced the Eisenhower administration that containing communism necessitated the use of public funds in limited quantities to set Latin American nations on the path toward liberal modernity. In so doing, it established the conditions for public–private cooperation. On April 8, 1959, 21 nations, including the United States, created the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). In taking that step, the administration signaled its tactical adjustment. Designed to serve as a multilateral vehicle through which developmental assistance could be distributed to Latin America, the IDB was initially capitalized at $1 billion, of which the United States contributed $450 million. The very creation of the IDB represented a reversal in US policy. Within the last two years of his second term, Eisenhower became convinced that to achieve US political and economic objectives in Latin America, he needed a coordinated mechanism to distribute developmental assistance. In 1960, the administration went further by agreeing to increase funding for Latin American development efforts in the Act of Bogotá, which created the Social Progress Trust Fund. The AFL-CIO wholeheartedly endorsed the Act of Bogotá, sought its rapid implementation, and pressed for a share of the funds to be earmarked toward fostering liberal unionism. Union officials encouraged a generous loan policy combined with strict oversight to ensure that funds were actually used to raise regional standards of living as the declaration suggested. Nevertheless, by participating in Latin American development efforts called for by regional leaders since the end of World War II, Eisenhower indicated a tactical change in US policy toward the region. The creation of both the IDB and the Social Progress Trust Fund were manifestations of Eisenhower's revised thinking and served as forerunners to Kennedy's Alliance for Progress.[16]

With its ascent in January 1961, the AFL-CIO was well positioned to work with the incoming John F. Kennedy administration on its vision for an Alliance for Progress, and in so doing, build on the programs that Eisenhower had begun. Alliance planners explicitly rooted their new program for Latin American development in the intellectual trappings of modernization theory. Designed to spur regional development and transfer $20 billion of public money to Latin America in the 1960s, the Alliance for Progress envisioned a partnership between governments and corporative groups in both the United States and Latin America in pursuit of ambitious political, economic, and social objectives. Milton Eisenhower, the former president's brother, gave voice to the high hopes placed in the US development effort for the region, writing, "One may assert that the Act of Bogotá, the Charter of Punta

del Este [the Alliance for Progress' 1961 founding document], and the Alliance for Progress constitute a modern Magna Carta of the Americas." As the predominant US labor confederation, the AFL-CIO had a key role to play within the Alliance, encouraging liberal labor development in the region. Union leaders, recognizing the confluence of official US interests with their own objective of spreading free labor ideology, endorsed Kennedy's "Partners for Progress" program in February 1961, well before formal multilateral discussions were held. They believed that the Alliance could serve as the liberal vehicle that would lead to higher wages, which would in turn lead to the ultimate objective of "human contentment and economic growth." AFL-CIO involvement constituted a "necessary means of assuring that benefits of progress are distributed widely among persons at all economic levels." If the Alliance could put Latin America on the path toward becoming a high mass-consumption society and hence modern in the parlance of modernization theory, then the AFL-CIO could assure that the benefits of modernity passed to Latin American workers in the same way that the New Deal order provided a share of benefits to workers in the United States. In short, the Alliance offered an answer to populist, Socialist, and Communist challenges to liberal hegemony in the hemisphere.[17]

Indeed, the challengers were numerous. Throughout the Western Hemisphere, the AFL-CIO's leaders faced a highly polarized labor environment, fractured along ideological lines. Communists, Christian trade unionists, statist corporatists, and liberals all jockeyed for power. That ideological fragmentation was reflected in the institutional landscape of inter-American labor organizations. ORIT was not the first international labor organization in the Western Hemisphere when it was founded in 1951. The political Left pioneered such organizations. In 1938, Mexico's prominent Marxist union leader, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, founded the *Confederación de Trabajadores de América Latina* (CTAL). It quickly became a dominant international labor organization in the hemisphere. Other organizations followed. With the world rather than a particular region as its focus, the WFTU was founded in 1945, initially comprising affiliates that covered the ideological spectrum from the Center-Left to Marxist Left. As Cold War politics quickly came to the foreground, however, AFL leaders rapidly identified the WFTU as a Communist-dominated organization (the CIO had affiliated with the WFTU, no doubt providing AFL leaders with additional incentive to denounce its US competitors). Even Perón attempted to pursue an international arm for statist corporatist labor in 1952, when he created the *Agrupación de Trabajadores Latinoamericanos Sindicalistas* (ATLAS). However, the organization was never especially successful, and was unable to survive after the 1955 coup that overthrew its founder. Nevertheless, taken in total, the AFL/AFL-CIO faced an uphill struggle to promote its particular brand of trade unionism. It never achieved the ideological hegemony that its leaders pursued.

* * *

Writing international labor into the inter-American history of the second half of the twentieth century promises to generate a more holistic understanding of the international and transnational history of the Americas. As historian Greg

Grandin argues, proponents of economic liberalism—who stressed the primacy of private property, individual rights, minimal state intervention in the economy, and the open door for trade and investment—clashed regularly with proponents of the primacy of social property and social justice.[18] Workers were important agents in those battles. Their method of integration into the political economy—and society at large—was at stake. International actors also took leading roles. Since the late nineteenth century, the US government was among the most important proponents of liberal internationalism. Businesses with international interests partnered with the state to pursue their mutual economic and political interests. With the triumph of the New Deal order, organized labor increasingly joined the state and the business community in promoting the liberal international project, believing that the New Deal social contract offered the best available path forward to the world's workers.

The AFL/AFL-CIO had the potential to reach Latin American workers by appealing to their common struggle on behalf of workers. However, Romualdi and his colleagues found lasting success elusive. Significant ideological differences—particularly concerning the proper relationship between the state and labor confederations—proved difficult to reconcile. The institutional relationship between the labor confederation and the state emerged as a central point of divergence. Unlike the AFL/AFL-CIO, many Latin American labor confederations were formally integrated into the state. In many other cases, labor unions were formally affiliated with political parties. That formal link to the government through a statist corporatist structure created dependence. Given the historic marginalization of workers throughout the region, many Latin American laborers were happy to trade autonomy in exchange for a heightened degree of economic security and guaranteed access to the corridors of power. Such benefits were difficult to overstate. Conversely, after the ideological battles of the 1930s and 1940s, the split house of American labor rejoined in 1955 with the reunification of the AFL and CIO. Although the process was not always smooth, and although the new AFL-CIO hierarchy did not command universal support from some leading figures on the CIO side, members agreed that their cause was best served by labor autonomy.

In addition to confronting ideological division, US labor leaders often had to overcome the United States' history of intervention and informal empire throughout Latin America at a time when discourses of sovereignty and nationalism enjoyed broad resonance. Critics frequently depicted Romualdi as an agent of American empire. Given the close ties—at least in foreign affairs—between labor, business, and the state, the charges were difficult to refute. Nor was tact one of Romualdi's strong suits. For all the complaints that the AFL/AFL-CIO officials made about the bullying tactics of Communists involved in international labor organizing, they were remarkably tone deaf to their own imposing behavior. By adopting an uncompromising, with-us-or-against-us approach, American labor contributed to the hemisphere's political and ideological polarization, and inadvertently reinforced the imperialist critique of the United States. Meanwhile, confronted by the politics of austerity, and too often caught up in the region's antisubversive campaigns of state terror, ordinary people—many

of them working class—too often found themselves the biggest losers of Latin America's Cold War.[19]

Notes

1. Because this chapter analyzes AFL and, after the 1955 merger, AFL-CIO activities from the 1940s to the 1960s, and because it is primarily organized thematically rather than chronologically, I will frequently use the abbreviation AFL/AFL-CIO. Prior to 1955, the CIO was also active in the international labor movement. However, it differed ideologically from the AFL and, after the merger, the AFL officials led the Confederation's international efforts. On Romualdi's background as well as the background of the AFL's activities in Latin America after World War II, see Serafino Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons: Recollections of a Labor Ambassador in Latin America* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967).
2. Romualdi, 49–63; Glenn J. Dorn, *Peronistas and New Dealers: U.S.-Argentine Rivalry and the Western Hemisphere, 1946–1950* (New Orleans: University Press of the South, 2005), especially 140–146.
3. *Ibid*; U.S. Department of State, *Blue Book on Argentina: Consultation among the American Republics with Respect for the Argentine Situation: Memorandum of the United States Government* (New York: Greenberg, 1946); Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946–1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) offers the most complete exploration of Argentine labor history during the Peronist and post-Peronist period.
4. Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser, eds., *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph, eds., *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America's Long Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile & the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). For a sense of some of the work being done at the intersection of US foreign relations history and labor history, see "Special Forum: Workers, Labor, and War: New Directions in the History of American Foreign Relations," and the commentary on that forum, in *Diplomatic History* 34 (2010).
5. John Milton Cooper Jr., *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900–1920* (New York: Norton, 1990), 3; Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).
6. David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962); Edmund F. Wehrle, *Between a River and a Mountain: The AFL-CIO and the Vietnam War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).
7. Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–1952* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); Howell John Harris, *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982).
8. Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007).
9. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO, 1935–1955* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).
10. A fast-growing literature is developing that deals with the effect of modernization theory on US foreign policy. See especially Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as*

Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). The most important work of modernization theory from a policymaking perspective is W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960).

11. Latham, especially 2–3, 21–68. Latham's scholarship exposes the adoption of the discourses of modernization theory within the highest circles of the official foreign policymaking establishment during the John F. Kennedy administration. However, his work leaves unexplored the ways in which other important corporative groups, such as organized labor, adopted the same discourses and contributed to the larger national mission.
12. Minutes, AFL-CIO Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, December 4, 1957, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/4 Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1956–1957, George Meany Memorial Archive [henceforth, GMMA].
13. Ibid; Minutes, AFL-CIO Inter-American Affairs Committee, February 19, 1959, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/5 Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1958, GMMA. In 1958, these themes were reinforced in another statement on Inter-American affairs. See Draft Resolution Submitted by Committee on Inter-American Affairs, "The Danger of Communist Infiltration," undated, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/5, Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1958, GMMA.
14. The AFL-CIO opposed dictatorships throughout the hemisphere and regularly provided statements against those from a variety of ideological backgrounds, from Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic to Fidel Castro in Cuba. In addition to ibid, see Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council on Meeting of American Foreign Ministers, August 16, 1960, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/6, Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1960, GMMA; Draft Resolution Submitted by Committee on Inter-American Affairs, "The Danger of Communist Infiltration," undated, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/5 Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1958, GMMA; Minutes, AFL-CIO Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, January 29, 1957, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/4, Reports/Serafino Romauldi [sic], 1956–1957, GMMA; Stephen G. Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005). For a useful discussion of democracy in Latin America, especially between World War II and the late 1940s, see Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 1–18; Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough, "Introduction: The Postwar Conjuncture in Latin America," and "Conclusion: The Postwar Conjecture in Latin America and its Consequences," in *Latin America Between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944–1948*, eds., Bethell and Roxborough, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Bethell and Roxborough's argument can also be found in Bethell and Roxborough, "The Impact of the Cold War on Latin America," in *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, eds., Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter (New York, 1994).
15. Romualdi; Gladys Delmas, "Latin Labor's Alarming Christians," *At Home and Abroad*, February 25, 1965, 27–30, RG 1–038 Office of the President, 62/1, ICFTU-ORIG, 1963–1965, GMMA.
16. Minutes, AFL-CIO Inter-American Affairs Committee, August 16, 1960, RG 1–027 Office of the President, 58/6, Reports/Serafino Romauldi [*sic*], 1960, GMMA; Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Committee, "The Latin American Aid Program," February 28, 1961, RG 1–038 Office of the President, 61/20, ICFTU-ORIT, 1961–1962, GMMA. Memo, Rubottom to Dillon, April 23, 1959, *FRUS,*

1958–1960, 5: 557–559; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1956–1961: The White House Years* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 516; Burton Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower's Foreign Economic Policy, 1953–1961* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

17. Latham, 69–108; Eisenhower, *The Wine Is Bitter*, xii; Jeffrey F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council, "Political Relationship with Latin America," February 28, 1961, RG 1–038 Office of the President, 61/20, ICFTU-ORIT, 1961–1962, GMMA; Report, Conference of AFL-CIO Unions Involved in Inter-American Activities, undated (October 9, 1961 meeting), RG 1–038, Office of the President, 61/20, ICFTU-ORIG, 1961–1962, GMMA; Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council on the Alliance for Progress, February 26, 1962, RG 1–038 Office of the President, 61/20, ICFTU-ORIT, 1961–1962, GMMA ("necessary means…" quotation). The Alliance for Progress included a labor advisory committee on which the AFL-CIO was represented. See also Statement by the AFL-CIO Executive Council on the Punta del Este Meeting of American Foreign Ministers, February 26, 1962, RG 1–038 Office of the President, 61/20, ICFTU-ORIT, 1961–1962, GMMA, which specifically declared Cuba as incompatible with the inter-American system and endorsed that nation's expulsion from the Organization of America States.
18. Greg Grandin, "The Liberal Traditions in the Americas: Rights, Sovereignty, and the Origins of Liberal Multilateralism," *American Historical Review*, 117 (2012).
19. For an overview of Latin America's Cold War, with emphasis on episodes of violence, see Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). An alternative interpretation is provided by Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Chapter Eight
The AFL-CIO and ORIT in Latin America's Andean Region, from the 1950s to the 1960s

Magaly Rodríguez García[1]

This chapter focuses on the relationship between US organized labor, Andean trade unions, and the *Organización Regional Interamericana de Trabajadores* (ORIT), the Inter-American regional organization of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).[2] Scholarly literature on the so-called free trade union movement in the Americas tends to portray ORIT as an organization strongly dominated by its US affiliate, the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), after the merging of the AFL and CIO in 1955.[3] Particularly during the first two decades of the Cold War, ORIT was viewed—by opponent Left-wing and Christian unionists, as well as by many ICFTU leaders—as a US instrument for anti-Communist propaganda. A thorough study of the ICFTU/ORIT and the AFL-CIO archives—in particular, the correspondence between US and Latin American labor leaders—indicates that a more nuanced analysis of the dynamics within the free trade union movement in the Americas is required. I argue that ORIT's actions reached further than pure anticommunism and that if ORIT became a Cold War tool for anti-Communist campaign in some countries, it was not in the first place due to US pressure but rather to Latin America's own concern with Communist dissemination and other political, economic, and trade union matters.

My focus on Latin Americans' agency and effectiveness in pushing their views within and around ORIT is not meant to suggest that the US influence in the Latin American trade union movement was negligible. The AFL/AFL-CIO's political, organizational, and financial might did play an important role in the history of organized labor south of the Rio Grande, but it did not prevent Latin American unions from developing their own views on political and socioeconomic issues. The interaction between North and Latin Americans was, indeed, far more complex than is often believed. Differences of opinion with regard to trade unions' political activity, workers' organization, and macro-economic planning shaped the views of US and Latin American leaders and resulted in a relationship that was not, by definition, asymmetrical. Both Latin American and US unionists

were often receptive to each other's ideas and strategies. And when disagreement between them arose, the financial and diplomatic power of the US unions was not always sufficient to persuade Latin Americans to alter their points of view.

An interesting illustration of the complex inter-American relationship was found in the Andes region, where the action of the free trade union movement led to different results. As Jon Kofas points out, Latin American countries assumed great geopolitical and economic significance for the United States in the immediate postwar period. Andean republics were no exception. Not only their natural resources and larger markets for manufactured goods and capital investment but also the increasing labor force and polarization (and potential radicalization) of organized workers caught the attention of the US political, economic, and labor elites.[4] The AFL's efforts to attract Latin American trade unions into one inter-American organization materialized in 1918, with the foundation of the Pan-American Federation of Labor (PAFL), but it was only after the Second World War that the AFL—and later the AFL-CIO—expanded to South America. From the mid-1940s onward, US and inter-American labor leaders were active in virtually all South American countries.

However, little is known about the free trade unions' involvement in the Andes region. For instance, Robert Alexander's narratives on organized labor in Latin America do not always offer detailed and critical analyses of the activities of the AFL/AFL-CIO and ORIT in Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela.[5] Similarly, Jon Kofas's focus on the views and reaction of Latin America's organized labor to US foreign policy does not provide many insights into the relationship between North American and Latino labor leaders. The autobiographic work of the AFL/AFL-CIO man in Latin America, Serafino Romualdi, says a great deal about his personal relationship with political leaders such as the Peruvian Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre and the Venezuelan Rómulo Betancourt, but little about the actual activity and difficulties of ORIT and the US unions in Andean countries.[6]

This chapter sets out to fill this gap by focusing on the relationship between the inter-American free trade union movement and workers' organizations from Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela during the 1950s and 1960s. The unions of these Andean countries represent three distinct attitudes toward the free labor movement: quasi-unconditional acceptance (Ecuador), refusal to join (Bolivia), and conditional acceptance (Venezuela). The causes that influenced this outcome form the central story of this chapter. The narrative unfolds in four parts and, with comparison in mind, it follows a thematic rather than a chronological order. It begins with a short historical overview of the free trade union movement in the Americas, from the foundation of the PAFL to ORIT. Next, it describes the moves of free trade union leaders to build labor networks in Venezuela and Ecuador, and their hesitating position in Bolivia. It is followed by an analysis of the expectations of Bolivian and Ecuadorian trade unionists from the US unions and ORIT; conversely, the conditions placed and concessions made by the inter-American free trade union movement to the labor leaders of these countries are also analyzed. Finally, it focuses on Venezuela and the difficult relationship between the different levels of the international trade union movement. The detailed analysis of Venezuela is justified by my belief that the conditional acceptance of the

Venezuelan trade unionists was perhaps the most "typical" answer of Latin American labor organizations to the free trade union movement. As such, it helps to understand why Latin American trade unionists sought cooperation with the US unions and ORIT. Some concluding remarks on the interaction between national and inter-American leaders that led to success (i.e., membership) in the case of Ecuador and Venezuela, and to failure in the case of Bolivia, are offered at the end of this study.

The Free Trade Union Movement in the Americas

The idea of inter-American labor cooperation existed long before the foundation of the ICFTU. Since the end of the First World War, the AFL took the lead to propagate its vision of regional labor cooperation. In 1918, it spearheaded the creation of the PAFL, and in 1948, it was one of the main forces behind the establishment of the *Confederación Inter-Americana de Trabajadores* (CIT). The latter was created to reorient Latin American trade unions toward a more moderate (if not overtly pro- at least less vehemently anti-US) stance. The CIT's founder also sought to weaken the influence of the leftist *Confederación de Trabajadores de América Latina* (CTAL)—which was founded in 1938 under the leadership of the Marxist trade union leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano[7]—and of the Argentine Peronist model of trade unionism.

A significant group within the Latin American labor movement shared some similar ideas with the Americans regarding political and socioeconomic issues. This reflected the changes that occurred in the Latin American labor scene in the immediate postwar period. After 1946–1947, new workers' organizations appeared, as many trade unionists grew disappointed with the development of organized labor at the national, regional (CTAL), and international (WFTU) levels. They feared the advancement of communism and sought, therefore, to precipitate a split within the ranks of the leftist CTAL; they also opposed centralism and the oppression of the working-class movement by authoritarian regimes, and felt great deference toward US institutions and its standard of living. They wanted to build a "modern" trade union movement independent of the traditional (Socialist and Catholic) political parties.[8] This, as well as the financial and technical aid offered by the US government and unions, was far more important to some Latin American labor leaders than any possible criticism they had of their northern neighbors. Inter-American cooperation was defended by many Latin American non-Communist trade unionists, because it was perceived as beneficial to the realization of their objectives.[9]

Thus, when Serafino Romualdi suggested the transformation of the CIT into the ICFTU regional organization in the Americas, many anti-CTAL Latin American labor leaders willingly agreed to the proposal. Jacobus Oldenbroek, ICFTU general-secretary, convened a regional trade union conference in Mexico City, from January 8 to 12, 1951. Delegates from 29 national centers were present at this conference: not only the pillars of CIT (the Chilean, Cuban, Peruvian, and US (AFL) unions), but also other important trade unions, such as the American CIO, the Canadian Congress of Labor, and the Mexican workers' confederation,

Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM). Some of the organizations at this congress had had close links with the leftist CTAL and therefore had not been members of the inter-American Confederation. A politically important and large ex-CTAL affiliate was the Mexican CTM, which had been purged of its radical elements, such as CTAL's founder Lombardo Toledano, in 1947–1948.[10] They all agreed to dissolve CIT and to create a new labor agency for the Americas: ORIT.[11]

But the heterogeneous character of North and Latin American unions led to an acrimonious founding congress. The Mexican representatives were reluctant to participate in the formation of a new organization that would merely be CIT under another name. Fidel Velázquez, CTM leader until his death, made the Mexicans' attendance at the conference conditional on the approval of their requests. One of their demands was to invite another Mexican labor organization (the *Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana*, CROM) to attend the conference.[12] US labor leaders, however, refused to accept this condition because CROM had irked the Americans with its refusal to support the AFL's efforts to promote free trade unionism in the region and with its open criticism of US foreign policy.[13]

The presence of the Argentinean *Confederación General del Trabajo* (CGT) at the congress also created tension between US and Cuban trade union leaders, and the rest of Latin American unionists. The Mexicans did not want the Argentinean workers to be left out,[14] while the US and Cuban representatives strongly opposed inviting Peronist trade unionists. Disappointed Latin American unionists therefore questioned the degree of autonomy that powerful trade unions were willing to grant to other national centers. Furthermore, Mexican labor leaders felt betrayed because the conference participants had chosen Havana, Cuba, instead of Mexico City as ORIT's headquarters, and elected the Cuban Francisco Aguirre as the organization's general-secretary. As a result of these tensions, the Mexicans left the congress and refused to join ORIT.[15]

Controversy did not end with the CTM's departure. During preparatory talks on the organization's constitution, a debate arose over the relation between ORIT and the ICFTU. Some advocated establishing an independent regional organization, but others preferred to create a direct branch of the ICFTU.[16] Most US and Latin American unionists opted for an independent organization while the ICFTU representatives (in particular, Oldenbroek) wanted to create a close link between the central and regional secretariats.[17] A compromise was finally reached. European and inter-American labor leaders agreed to both the continuation of the conference and the ICFTU-ORIT's relationship. The ORIT would have its own executive committee, which was financially independent, but it had to coordinate its activities with the ICFTU. The ORIT's regional congress would appoint the regional secretary and pay his salary, not the ICFTU. These arrangements favored those who wanted to create an organization sufficiently independent from the Brussels office.[18]

The hemisphere's union leaders considered ORIT's founding congress a partial victory: only the affiliation of the Mexican CTM would have turned it into a complete success.[19] European and US unionists feared that the Mexicans would enhance their contacts and exchanges with Peronist labor leaders, who were making plans

for the foundation of a new Latin American labor organization.[20] Hence, after the congress, ICFTU and ORIT leaders made great efforts to convince the CTM to join them. US labor leaders and the US labor attaché in Mexico were also willing to reestablish relations with the CTM leadership.[21]

The charm offensive culminated with an invitation for the Mexicans to attend ORIT's second congress in Rio de Janeiro, in December 1952. During this congress, it was decided to move the headquarters from Havana to Mexico City. This decision not only was a way to placate the Mexicans, but it was also the result of political factors. Apart from dissatisfaction with ORIT general-secretary Francisco Aguirre, many delegates thought it inappropriate to maintain the regional secretariat's headquarters in a country ruled by a military dictator, Fulgencio Batista, who had seized power unconstitutionally earlier that year. In February 1953, the CTM's leader met the AFL's boss, George Meany, in Miami Beach. Serafino Romualdi, who acted as interpreter between Fidel Velázquez and Meany, recalls that when the former entered the room, "He proffered his hand to George [Meany], saying: 'I have come to tell you that I am suffering from amnesia. I can't remember a thing'. To which Meany replied, grasping Velázquez's hand: 'Brother Fidel, I am down with the same sickness!'."[22] On May 1, 1953, the CTM announced its support and willingness to join the free trade union movement.[23]

Labor Networking in the Andes Region

One of the first concessions the AFL made to Latin American trade unions prior to the founding of CIT and ORIT was to respect their ties with political parties. As Robert Alexander noticed, "Romualdi knew enough about Latin American labor movements to know that the U.S. model of a labor movement that had little or no connection with a political party was not customary—or acceptable—in Latin America."[24] Romualdi himself stated in his autobiography that without political support, his efforts to promote free trade unionism in Latin America would have been futile.[25] Consequently, he established strong relations with the leaders of political parties who had close links with workers' organizations, as well as the trade unionists. Furthermore, Romualdi sought to broaden labor's ties with trade unionists across the hemisphere; leaders of economically advanced countries with a long-established tradition of trade union organization, such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, as well as making a 1946 tour of Venezuela and "backward countries"[26] such as Bolivia and Ecuador.

Romualdi arrived in La Paz in August 1946, just after the overthrow of Bolivia's civilian-military regime that had been led by the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR—widely, albeit mistakenly, viewed as totalitarian[27]) and a nationalist organization known as *Razón de Patria* (RADEPA). Romualdi and Bolivian labor leaders Víctor Daza and Simón Chacón opposed Communist, MNR, and Trotskyite unions—particularly the miners' *Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia*—and wanted to attract moderate trade unions toward the inter-American trade union movement. But the identification of the Bolivian free trade unionists with the conservative regime of Enrique Hertzog did not make them popular among the Bolivian labor masses. This did not prevent

Romualdi and the Bolivian labor leaders from attempting to divide the existing trade unions and bring them into a new labor confederation. With the support of the recently founded CIT, they established the *Confederación Boliviana de Trabajadores* (CBT) in 1948, and committed themselves to promote the free trade union movement in Bolivia by all possible means.[28]

Víctor Daza claimed that the CBT had the potential to attract large sections of the Bolivian unions. In his view, Bolivian trade unionists were tired of "totalitarian" elements within the labor movement. Well-known mine leader Juan Lechín was sometimes depicted as a "Nazi" and at times as a "Communist" as a way to undermine his popularity within the trade union movement.[29] Some workers did withdraw from the Communist unions, but the MNR succeeded in maintaining control of the Bolivian labor movement. In spite of their radicalism, most workers, and the miners in particular, identified the MNR with the struggle against the government and the large mining companies that had contributed to the overthrow of the MNR-RADEPA regime in 1946. According to the Trotskyite leader Guillermo Lora, the vague ideological position of the MNR also facilitated the miners' backing.[30] After the Revolution of 1952, organized labor was co-opted by the MNR and a new labor confederation was born: The *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB). The CBT did not survive the revolution, but neither the AFL nor ORIT gave up their intentions to seduce the Bolivian workers into the free trade union movement.[31] The expectations and conditions of both labor groupings will be analyzed in the next section; first a brief evaluation of the efforts and achievements of the free trade union leaders in Ecuador and Venezuela.

In both countries, the establishment of labor networks went more smoothly than in Bolivia. Communists held important positions in the Ecuadorian and Venezuelan labor movements. But while Communist and Socialist labor leaders were able to maintain control of many unions in Ecuador until the early 1960s, they ultimately lost the battle to the *Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela* (CTV), established in 1947 under the leadership of Rómulo Betancourt's populist party, *Acción Democrática* (AD).[32] Serafino Romualdi met Betancourt—provisional president of the civilian-military junta that governed Venezuela between 1945 and 1948—in 1946, during his long trip around various Latin American republics and, with little effort, persuaded him of the necessity to form a trade union alternative to the leftist CTAL. Betancourt himself was a fervent supporter of the idea of an inter-American labor federation free of Communist influence.

However, the Venezuelan CTV leaders were not immediately convinced of the desirability of creating a regional labor organization parallel to CTAL. In fact, for a while after its foundation in 1947, the CTV maintained contacts with both CTAL and AFL leaders. On the domestic level, too, CTV unionists were not afraid of closing ranks with Communists for strike activity. For the CIT founding congress in Lima (1948), the CTV agreed to attend and to be represented by its president, Pedro Bernardo Pérez Salinas, who stressed that the Venezuelan delegation assumed a mere observer status. Their initial hesitation toward the free trade union movement annoyed the CIT pillars (Chilean, Peruvian, and US unions) and tempted the Peruvian hosts to bar the Venezuelans from participating in the conference.[33] Steve Ellner concludes that this incident proved that "in

spite of the ardent anticommunism of many AD labor leaders, the AD-controlled labor movement was less anti-Communist and more autonomous with reference to the polarities of the Cold War than its ideological counterparts in other countries."[34]

Indeed, fervent anticommunism and, perhaps as important, a heavy dose of opportunism were the main reasons why Ecuadorian labor leaders felt attracted to the activities initiated by the AFL and Latin American moderate and conservative unions in the continent. The *Confederación Obrera del Guayas* (COG), a long-established but small union group with strong mutualist features from the coastal zone of Ecuador, felt strongly attracted to the free trade union movement.[35] So much so that it started to use the ICFTU name in its publications and correspondence before actually becoming an ICFTU member. The ICFTU Secretariat contacted the Ecuadorians and informed them of the necessity of membership in order to be allowed to use the name of the international confederation in trade union campaigns and publications. Immediately after this communication, COG requested membership to the ICFTU and ORIT.[36] As an ICFTU/ORIT member, COG wanted to destroy, or at least weaken, the leftist *Confederación de Trabjadores del Ecuador* (CTE), the dominant labor organization in Ecuador and an active member of the Left-wing Latin American confederation, CTAL, and the WFTU.[37]

Ecuador itself was not a priority for the free trade union movement, but the existence of the relatively powerful CTE made it relevant. Even though the Socialist Party claimed control of the CTE, the free trade union movement in Ecuador targeted the "Communist Front." As the CTE was internally divided, the ICFTU, ORIT, and COG believed they could help its moderate members strengthen their position within the leftist Confederation and convert them to free trade unionism. Leonardo Pita, ORIT representative in Ecuador, established contacts with CTE leaders to assess the possibilities of persuading the Confederation to withdraw its membership from the WFTU and CTAL. Once it became clear that the CTE conversion was not feasible, the free labor movement launched a second, more aggressive plan that aimed at the division of the leftist Confederation and the creation of a new trade union center.[38]

In 1958, Serafino Romualdi and the Peruvian Arturo Jáuregui travelled to Ecuador and met members of the main trade unions. Romualdi suggested that the Ecuadorian free trade unionists should group moderate members from the CTE into a new organization first, and work for a fusion with Catholic unions from the *Confederación Ecuatoriana de Obreros Católicos* (CEDOC, founded in 1944) afterward. The free trade union leaders thought that the execution of this plan would be facilitated if they succeeded in getting political support from national and international authorities. Romualdi obtained the moral support of the Ecuadorian president and leader of the Social Christian Party, Camilo Ponce Enríquez, who welcomed the activities of the free labor movement in Ecuador. Jáuregui and Humberto Navarro, a CTE-dissident, contacted the US labor attaché in Ecuador and obtained his support in the form of scholarships for trade unionists.[39]

International Trade Secretariats were also included in these organizational activities. Cooperation with ITSs was important because they were perceived as

relatively neutral organizations; many of them existed prior to the ICFTU and kept their autonomy after the latter's foundation in 1949.[40] In Ecuador, the ITSs contributed to the organization of trade union courses, which attracted many CTE members. During these courses, various trade unionists expressed their wish to form a new labor confederation.[41] On May 1, 1958, they published a trade union manifesto in one of the most important Ecuadorian newspapers, *El Comercio*, calling for the establishment of an independent labor movement and for cooperation with "progressive employers."[42]

This publication convinced ORIT leaders that Ecuadorian trade unionists would work to strengthen and further develop the free labor movement. To support their efforts, the inter-American organization sent a permanent representative, Julio Etcheverry, to Ecuador from the Paraguayan Workers' Confederation in exile. Together with COG, the ORIT affiliate in Ecuador, Etcheverry started a campaign that focused on trade union education. Hundreds of training courses were organized for the benefit of Ecuadorian trade unionists; others obtained scholarships to travel to the United States or Europe to visit the offices of national and international labor organizations.[43] These activities prompted the development of relatively strong networks that facilitated the establishment of a new labor association in April 1962, the *Confederación Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres* (CEOSL).[44] As in other Andean countries, the cooperation between local and foreign trade unions was heavily dependent on the expectations and (in)flexibility of their leaders.

Expectations, Conditions, and Disappointments

In Bolivia, the AFL/AFL-CIO and CIT/ORIT fostering of the anti-Communist and anti-MNR labor confederation, *Confederación Boliviana de Trabajadores* (CBT) did not help free trade union leaders after the MNR came to power in 1952. As Romualdi admitted in his autobiography, the AFL and CIT made an enormous mistake by believing the rumors about the MNR and not putting themselves on the side of the unions it controlled.[45] Shortly after the revolution, Romualdi went to Bolivia to discuss the possible COB affiliation with the ICFTU and ORIT. To the US and ORIT leaders, who saw that the 1952 events in Bolivia and the MNR promises of radical political and socioeconomic reform attained great resonance in Latin America, it was of primary importance to persuade important labor actors, Juan Lechín in particular, to become part of the free trade union family. From the point of view of Washington and moderate labor leaders in the region, the Bolivian revolution could have a destabilizing impact on the neighboring countries, so it seemed imperative to convince Bolivian unionists of the necessity of peaceful reform.

The US unions and ORIT put aside their former doubts about the MNR-controlled unions and invited COB to the ORIT's second congress, held in Rio de Janeiro (December 1952). Radical unionists refused to accept cooperation with pro-AFL leaders, but the COB leadership decided to send a delegation to Brazil. This move can be interpreted as a test by the Bolivians to see how far they could trust ORIT. After Romualdi's visit to Bolivia, he had written to COB leader Mario

Torres that he did not object to the nationalization of the mines, one of the COB's main objectives.[46] It is, however, not clear whether Romualdi supported the COB's proposal of nationalization without indemnification or the more moderate MNR project of nationalization with compensation, which materialized in October 1952. According to Jon Kofas, Romualdi "was forced to reverse his position after the State Department expressed his categorical opposition to the nationalization scheme, a clear indication that ORIT's policy was not completely independent of the State Department's foreign policy."[47] ORIT documents disclose a different story.

During the Rio de Janeiro congress, the COB delegation proposed to place nationalization of industries in the ORIT's program but the regional organization refused to support the Bolivian proposal. ORIT claimed that nationalization was not the answer to Latin American problems and that state-controlled industries could sometimes be dangerous for the free development of trade unions. ORIT also insisted that public and private investments, as well as cooperation with democratic governments and progressive employers, were necessary for an effective socioeconomic reform.[48] ORIT did, however, acknowledge the right of the Bolivian MNR government to nationalize the mines, and it congratulated the COB for its role played during the revolution that brought them to power.[49] But, as is the case with Romualdi, it is not clear whether ORIT supported COB's objective of nationalization without compensation, which was more radical than the MNR's plan. What is certain is that the ORIT's decision—backed by the US delegation—to support the Bolivian revolution and the nationalization of mines was to a great extent meant to facilitate the affiliation of COB. In his pioneering work on the ORIT, Pedro Reiser concluded that the regional organization's second congress represented a success for Latin American unionists who, by getting many concessions from the US unions, wanted to contradict the accusations of those (Communist, Peronist, and Christian Democrat) opponents who depicted the ORIT as a puppet of the US unions and the State Department.[50]

Nonetheless, the Bolivians were hard to convince. Lechín himself did not seem unsympathetic to inter-American labor cooperation. In private encounters with officials from the British and US embassies, he made it clear that he did not support COB's affiliation with CTAL.[51] In 1955, he attended the national congress that saw the unification of the US unions into the AFL-CIO. During the "heroic phase of the revolution" (1952–1956), Lechín's views were moderate, and even after the introduction of the loathed US plan for economic stabilization in 1956, he insisted that US investment was not unwelcomed and that it was even necessary for the recovery of the Bolivian economy.[52] But Lechín was also very conscious of "anti-Yankee" sentiments among many COB leaders and the rank-and-file unionists. The acute economic crisis of the 1950s did not favor close cooperation with an inter-American labor organization such as the ORIT, so even the moderate elements within COB chose independence from international affiliation.

Lechín radicalized when it became clear that the new MNR regime (1956–1960), headed by Hernán Siles Suazo, was planning to reverse the concessions made to workers by following almost blindly the US stabilization plan. Something similar occurred during the second presidency of Victor Paz Estenssoro (1960–1964), when he proposed the so-called Triangular Plan for the reorganization

of the mine industry. These plans became the center of the COB's attack. But while the Bolivian labor leaders became increasingly critical of the liberal policies of the MNR governments, the ORIT started to support COB members who opposed the "extremist" elements within the Bolivian labor organization. The radicalization of the Bolivian unionists after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 did not contribute to the rapprochement between COB and ORIT.[53] To the contrary, at the beginning of the 1960s, the ORIT helped the COB dissidents to create a new, pro-government trade union, the *Central Obrera Boliviana de Unión Revolucionaria*. This new organization was, however, merely an appendage of the regime and never succeeded in replacing the popular COB. The latter was violently repressed by the Right-wing military dictatorship of General René Barrientos (1964–1969), but the ORIT failed to denounce the regime's violation of union rights. COB denounced the ORIT's attempts to create parallel trade unions, resented the lack of support during the dictatorship, and opposed the integration of the Bolivian labor organization into the free trade union movement.[54]

To the north of Bolivia, the relationship between ORIT and national labor organizations was less rocky but not altogether trouble-free. After the CEOSL was established in 1962, labor leaders stressed that "an intense educational and organizational campaign must be put into effect immediately in order to destroy any diabolical plan of the C.T.E.'s Communist leaders."[55] One of the main priorities of the young confederation was thus creation of an institute for labor education. The AFL-CIO responded favorably and immediately to this request. Romualdi, who was by that time leader of the recently established American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD),[56] sent a representative to Ecuador to help organize trade union education. The *Instituto de Educación Sindical Ecuatoriano* was founded in 1963, with the financial and technical assistance of the US unions. It focused on leadership training and collective bargaining. Even though most Ecuadorian trade unionists had little or no skills to engage in effective collective negotiations, Robert Alexander claims that the number of collective agreements increased significantly after 1962.[57]

For trade union activities proper, Ecuadorian unionists affiliated with CEOSL were in constant need of technical and material support. Apart from a considerable reduction in the affiliation fee, some CEOSL unions—such as the first ORIT member in Ecuador, COG—received monthly contributions from ORIT.[58] Many Ecuadorians expected office material and financial aid also from the AFL-CIO, the ICFTU, and International Trade Secretariats. This exasperated many international labor leaders, who complained about the dubious requests coming from Ecuador. For instance, the general-secretary of the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers criticized those Ecuadorian unionists who "think the IFPAAW is a charitable institution."[59]

The dependent relationship of the Ecuadorian free trade unionists on the regional and international labor organizations, the moderate position of the CEOSL and ORIT toward the 1963–1966 military dictatorship, and reports of CIA infiltration in the free labor movement, only helped to exacerbate the criticism by Left-wing and Catholic unions.[60] There were, however, a few elements

within the CEOSL who were truly committed to the development of an independent labor organization. For instance, Matías Ulloa, since his nomination as secretary-general in 1963 and in spite of his lack of trade union leadership,[61] started to realize that the influence of the US unions, the AIFLD, and the ORIT had a negative impact on the Ecuadorian free labor movement. Ulloa acknowledged the need for economic and technical assistance and never failed to defend cooperation with the US unions, but he disliked the hefty intervention of foreign organizations in the internal running and educational activities of CEOSL.[62] Ulloa complained, for example, about the granting of AIFLD scholarships to trade unionists without previous consultation with the central bureau. Furthermore, the activities of the ORIT representative in Ecuador irritated Ulloa. Chilean Oscar Recabarren represented ORIT in Ecuador and took, according to Ulloa, too many unilateral decisions, for example, the appointment of new staff members for CEOSL. In Ulloa's view, the Left-wing and Catholic trade unions were less harmful to CEOSL than those free trade unionists who were more preoccupied with their personal interests than with the defense of workers' rights.[63]

Ulloa's opprobrium did not pass unnoticed. Initially, the US unions and ORIT tried to placate him by insisting that his reaction was excessive.[64] When they realized that Ulloa was not convinced, they adopted a more radical strategy. In 1963, ORIT leader Arturo Jáuregui informed the ICFTU Brussels Secretariat that, "Although the Ecuadorian democratic trade union movement is critical, we are confident that with our help the present misunderstandings can be overcome, through the elimination of discordant factors and a proper division of responsibilities."[65] Hence, Ulloa needed to be replaced. Since neither the ORIT nor the AIFLD could fire him, they chose to ostracize him. While Ulloa and his few supporters were ignored, more moderate (submissive or simply opportunistic?) CEOSL members were favored with training, scholarships, and financing for office material, propaganda, and organizing activities. Their strengthening led to the nomination of a new general-secretary during the CEOSL's third congress in 1966.[66]

The "*entreguismo*" of the CEOSL to the US unions and the ORIT remained unchallenged until the end of the 1960s, but it was not bulletproof. Although Ulloa resigned himself to the failure to bring about some change within the CEOSL, the idea of an independent and more combatant labor organization did not fade. His critical position encouraged some young labor activists who believed that the Social Democratic model of European unionism was more appropriate in the Ecuadorian context than the conservative one propagated by the US unions. Increasing popular discontent with the economic climate at the end of the decade combined with objection to mismanagement by the new CEOSL leader, Luis Villacrés, motivated the dissidents to press for a more militant labor organization and for more cooperation with the other labor confederations, the leftist CTE, and the Catholic CEDOC.

During the early 1970s, the CEOSL was divided into two factions, one around Villacrés and the other headed by José Chávez. At its sixth national congress (1974), CEOSL nominated Chávez general-secretary.[67] The purge of conservative elements within the CEOSL more or less coincided with what Luis Anderson

(ORIT leader from 1985 until his death in 2003) called "the redemption of ORIT"; that is, the period during which a new generation of labor leaders pushed for a more vigorous and independent inter-American workers organization.[68] Several of these new ORIT leaders came from the Venezuelan CTV.

National, Regional, and International Free Trade Unions[69]

The Venezuelan trade unions only hesitatingly became members of the inter-American free labor movement. The relationship between the CTV and inter-American leaders from the CIT was strengthened only after 1948, when a military junta toppled the AD government of Rómulo Gallegos. The AD and Communist parties, along with the trade unions allied to both, were dissolved by decree. Political activities were outlawed, which meant that political and labor leaders had to operate clandestinely or organize opposition from abroad.[70] Exiled CTV labor leaders Augusto Malavé and Pedro Pérez Salinas, among others, established close ties with the international free labor movement in order to put pressure on the Venezuelan military dictatorship. On the one hand, they worked as ORIT representatives in various Latin American countries, and on the other, they organized campaigns aimed at calling the attention of the international community to the Venezuelan political situation.[71] The Venezuelan leaders in exile or underground were pleased with the assistance the ORIT's predecessor, the CIT, had rendered to their unions and with its denouncing of the regime-controlled workers' delegation to the thirty-third Conference of the International Labor Organization (ILO).[72] A similar attitude was expected from the ICFTU and ORIT.[73]

The foundation of parallel trade unions by the Venezuelan government in 1952 aimed at the creation of a solid social foundation at home, and maintenance of a positive image in the international arena.[74] In April 1952, the Pérez Jiménez administration sent four labor representatives to the Fifth Conference of American Members of the ILO in Rio de Janeiro. The credentials of the Venezuelan workers' delegation were challenged on the basis of reports submitted by CTV leaders regarding the government's violation of the freedom of association and interference in trade union activities.[75] But the ICFTU and ORIT representatives insisted on the pointlessness of such a challenge because, according to ILO rules, national delegations could not be refused in regional conferences. Hence, they opted for negotiation and aimed at the normalization of relations with the regime.[76] Jacobus Oldenbroek (ICFTU) and Francisco Aguirre (ORIT) thought they could negotiate with the Venezuelan delegation, and felt very pleased when the latter signed a statement in which it pledged to fight for the reestablishment of a democratic labor movement and the release of imprisoned trade unionists. The Venezuelan leaders in exile tolerated this conciliatory move in the hope of obtaining a loosening of military rule.[77]

It soon became clear that the military junta made no attempt to abandon its repressive measures, so the CTV leaders expected the ICFTU and ORIT to assume a more combative stance. They were deeply disappointed when their subsequent petition challenging the credentials of the Venezuelan worker delegates to the International Labor Conference in Geneva, June 1952, was ignored.[78] ORIT leaders

Romualdi and Aguirre had advised the ICFTU to continue conversations with the Venezuelan delegation due to insufficient documentation proving the military regime's violation of workers' rights; they still believed in the possibility of achieving an agreement with the representatives of the military government, even more so after the latter had agreed to welcome an ICFTU mission in Venezuela.[79]

The ICFTU and ORIT wanted to promote a "program of mediation"[80] instead of outright opposition to the regime. During the June 1952 ILO conference, representatives of the ICFTU and the Venezuelan government agreed to send Ad Vermeulen, a Dutch ICFTU official, as a one-man mission to Venezuela. According to Vermeulen, cooperation between the trade unions and the government would be instrumental in the formation of one labor organization composed of representatives of all trends in Venezuelan trade unionism. In his view, government and labor needed to agree to the basic principles of responsible social policy: The trade union movement needed "to stand aside from party-politics" and the government had to "offer guarantees regarding the freedom of press, assembly, speech and agreement concerning the activities of the trade union movement."[81] Vermeulen was very pleased with the government's hospitality and its positive attitude toward the ICFTU mission. He was impressed by the economic progress achieved through oil revenue, which allowed the regime to make important concessions to the laboring classes. More importantly, he celebrated the military regime's agreement to the establishment of a new labor organization that would refrain itself from politics. For Vermeulen, this proved the regime's conciliatory stance.[82]

The government's promises were, however, merely symbolic. Therefore, the Venezuelan labor leaders in exile insisted on the necessity of organizing a proper international campaign in favor of democracy. They found a closer ally for their cause in the person of the young Costa Rican Luis Alberto Monge. In 1950–1952, prior to becoming ORIT's general-secretary, Monge was in charge of the relationship between the ILO and the Latin American labor movement. While in office, he repeatedly complained about the ILO stance toward Latin American dictatorships and the sluggishness of the organization's response to the complaints of democratic trade unionists.[83] Monge also seized every opportunity to inform trade unionists from the Americas of the plans of Latin American dictators. For instance, he informed the Venezuelan leaders in exile that the military junta was attempting to obtain the support of other Latin American countries for a seat on the ILO Administrative Council. Monge thought that Latin American delegates to the ILO Workers' Group would find this information valuable and take the necessary steps to protest against the Venezuelan candidacy. However, Romualdi thought it was "improper . . . to take a public stand" because such matters pertained exclusively to the governmental group within the ILO.[84]

Monge wrote confidentially to both Romualdi and the ICFTU representative for Latin American affairs, Hermes Horne, to express his views about their initiative to negotiate with the delegates of the Venezuelan military junta during the 1952 ILO conferences. According to Monge, such a strategy was wrong. First, he found it rather naive to believe in the sincerity of the Venezuelan official delegates. Second, Monge thought that even if the military regime agreed to set trade unionists free, the latter would not be able to act independently. The

liberation of trade unionists would only be a tactic by the Marcos Pérez Jiménez administration to fool and silence the international community. Third, Monge urged the ICFTU and ORIT to remember that the Venezuelan government was fundamentally undemocratic, as it had come to power by means of a military coup and had not held democratic elections since 1948. Monge's initiative had one positive result, but it was important: Romualdi admitted that the international free trade union organizations had made a mistake and wrote to Monge that he was trying to fix it by publishing all the documents that the ICFTU and ORIT had received from Venezuelan leaders in exile but had not been given to the ILO Credentials Committee.[85]

ORIT changed its attitude toward the Venezuelan regime at the same time it changed its leadership. Under the short-lived leadership of the Cuban Francisco Aguirre, ORIT supported the ICFTU negotiating tactic. According to Rómulo Betancourt, this derived from the political situation in Aguirre's home country: Cuban labor leaders would have felt constrained from attacking dictatorships abroad while concurrently tolerating and even forming part of the consultative bodies of the Batista dictatorship.[86] When Monge became general-secretary at the end of 1952, ORIT distanced itself from the ICFTU's point of view with regard to Venezuela and defended the position taken by the CTV leaders in exile.

To many Latin American moderate unionists, fear of Communist propagation was exaggerated. In Venezuela, CTV leaders in exile emphasized that the majority of Venezuelan workers were democratic and did not want to be controlled by Communists.[87] Ad Vermeulen also confirmed this: In his view, most Venezuelan workers were "very national-minded" and loyal to Simón Bolívar's independent spirit. According to Vermeulen, the Venezuelans agreed to the necessity of fighting Communists within the trade union movement but did not wish to turn anti-communism into a priority.[88]

Nevertheless, Latino free trade unionists were not afraid of exploiting the fear of communism to their own advantage. For instance, when the Venezuelan labor leaders in exile felt the urgent need to obtain concrete financial and technical aid in order to increase their activities in Venezuela, they addressed the ICFTU and ORIT to ask for help "to avoid the danger of increasing Communist influence among labor ranks."[89] They claimed that the repressive nature of the dictatorial regime in Venezuela was leading to a radicalization of the working classes from which Communists could profit.[90] In truth, when this document was written in 1954, Venezuelan workers were relatively passive. They reacted to the regime with strikes and other forms of protest between 1950 and 1953, but between 1953 and 1956 there was a lull, partly as a result of demoralization and partly because of the benefits obtained from economic growth, which manifested itself in the creation of new jobs and investment in infrastructure and other public services.[91]

Thus, toward the mid-1950s, the CTV leaders in exile magnified both the repressive nature of the military junta and the danger of Communist propagation in Venezuela. But the CTV commitment to contribute to the restoration of democratic rule in Venezuela was genuine. For that purpose, the Venezuelans wanted to initiate a campaign aimed at the organization of trade union cadres that would facilitate the reestablishment of legal and democratic trade unions. The CTV

leaders proposed a plan of action in which the international trade union organizations would play an important role. They requested support for a monthly grant to a trade union organizer and for the funding of propaganda. They also asked the ICFTU and ORIT not to recognize the state-controlled trade union, to reject its petition to become a member of the free labor movement, and to oppose the regime's participation in international organizations.[92]

The CTV requests obtained full support from the ORIT Secretariat. As far as the inter-American organization was concerned, the official trade union movement of Venezuela stood no chance of becoming affiliated with the ORIT.[93] ORIT leaders also wanted to help the Venezuelans to obtain sufficient financial aid from the international trade union movement. Immediately after having received the CTV petition in 1954, Monge wrote to the ICFTU leader, Oldenbroek, to make a plea. He was aware of the objection that the ICFTU would have against the CTV petition, which could be perceived as a request for help for purely political action. Monge argued that such an interpretation would be unfair: First because the CTV activities responded to the political situation in Venezuela, and second because they aimed at the restoration of liberty and democracy, without which free trade unions could not function. Moreover, Monge recalled that the ICFTU had created a special fund for Eastern European work, and though aware of the importance of such material aid, he thought it inconvenient and even dangerous for the reputation of the free trade union movement to confine it to workers who struggled against Communist dictatorships.

According to Monge, the lack of effective and concrete support was putting the international trade union organizations in a "ridiculous position."[94] This criticism—written in March 1954—was Monge's reaction to the mocking response by the military junta to one of his letters to the president of Venezuela. A representative of the Venezuelan government wrote to Monge in February 1954, informing him that his letters had been thrown into the dustbin. According to this official, the Venezuelan government did not plan to take into account the recommendations made by organizations such as ORIT because they strongly opposed any foreign intervention in domestic affairs. Furthermore, the Venezuelan military thought that the ORIT lacked the capacity and moral credentials to impose norms of conduct on the regime. Finally, the Venezuelan official called the ORIT "*un grupo enclenque,*" a "puny" group that lacked the most basic strength to defend its point of view.[95]

Therefore, Monge urged the ICFTU to respond favorably to the CTV requests. They did. From 1955 onward, the ICFTU altered its view of the dictatorship and the trade union situation in Venezuela. Two factors provoked this change: First, the international confederation recognized that the Venezuelan government had not fulfilled any of the promises it had made to the ILO and the free trade union movement; and second, the pressure exerted by North and Latin American labor leaders, particularly Monge, Malavé, and Romualdi.[96] The ICFTU and ORIT also realized that a harder stance on the Venezuelan military junta was required in the international arena.

Free trade unionists protested unanimously against the employer and government representatives within the ILO Governing Body, which had decided to

accept the invitation of the Venezuelan government to hold the April 1955 ILO Petroleum Industrial Committee in Caracas. The international free labor movement called for a boycott of the meeting: the ICFTU, ORIT, the International Federation of Petroleum Workers, and the US unions responded by refusing to send worker delegates to the conference.[97] Vermeulen, as representative of the Workers' Group of the ILO Governing Body at the Petroleum Conference, treated the military junta in a totally different manner than he had in 1952, when he led the ICFTU mission to Venezuela. His speech represented a diplomatic defeat for the regime. Vermeulen emphasized how much he regretted the decision of the ILO Governing Body to hold the conference in Caracas because the Venezuelan government had not kept any of the promises it had made to the international labor mission to release imprisoned trade union leaders, to respect freedom of association, and to end repression against the free labor movement.[98]

The Venezuelan regime reacted drastically to Vermeulen's accusations by ordering him deported. The ILO Governing Body then cancelled the remainder of the conference "on the grounds that the meeting could not continue under conditions which provided no guarantees of the freedom of speech and personal safety for the delegates."[99] In 1957, the Venezuelan government announced its decision to withdraw from the ILO.[100] CTV leaders in exile were pleased to learn about the ICFTU's shift with regard to the dictatorship's participation at the international level. They were aware of the fact that international pressure would not be sufficient to remove Jiménez—but appreciated the public condemnation made by free trade unionists in their refusal to further negotiate with the representatives of the military regime.[101]

Immediately after the military junta's downfall in 1958, exiled CTV leaders requested a grant of US $10,000 from the ICFTU to finance their return to Venezuela and to start restructuring the labor movement,[102] but ICFTU leaders did not wish to commit themselves "to any persons or groups without full knowledge of the situation inside the country."[103] Instead, they decided to grant the requested aid only after they had received the recommendations of a trade union delegation they planned to send to Venezuela. Venezuelan labor leaders did not agree with the timing of this mission for two reasons. First, they did not think an ICFTU/ORIT delegation could be of help at the moment, since plans to rebuild the trade union movement had already been drawn. Second, they thought that immediately sending such a mission would be counterproductive and politically unwise. During the last years of the dictatorship, the main political parties and trade unions—Communists included—had put aside their mutual animosities and—with the support of discontented military officers, the church, and business representatives—organized several street protests culminating in the general strike of January 21, 1958, which marked the end of the military junta.[104]

This unity was retained after the events of January 1958 in order to guarantee a peaceful return to democracy and to avoid situations (e.g., industrial disturbances) that could again encourage military intervention. A United Trade Union Committee was set up for this purpose. It consisted of trade unionists who were closely connected with the four principal political parties: the Social Democrats (AD), the Social Christian Party, the Communist Party, and the Republican

Democratic Union.[105] Therefore, the Venezuelan labor leaders believed an ICFTU/ORIT mission in Caracas would only incite other international labor organizations, particularly the World Federation of Trade Unions and the *Confederación de Trabajadores de América Latina*, to do the same.[106]

Yet the ICFTU Secretariat disregarded these arguments, as well as ORIT leaders' advice to postpone sending an international mission until it was "duly prepared by the CTV itself."[107] A four-man delegation visited Venezuela in February 1958, and although the Unified Trade Union Committee was not prepared to receive them because of the risk of disrupting national labor unity, the ICFTU delegates came to the conclusion that circumstances were favorable for the rebuilding of the free trade union movement. They were also satisfied with the confirmation that the leaders of the former CTV had the support of the majority of the workers. The ICFTU delegation left the US $10,000 agreed upon to rebuild Venezuela's free trade unionists and expected the reorganized confederation to affiliate with the free labor movement in the near future.[108]

The CTV/AD's Augusto Malavé confirmed his willingness to maintain a close relationship with the international free trade union organizations, but a memorandum written by Venezuela's new president, Rómulo Betancourt, expressed the United States' dissatisfaction with the ICFTU/ORIT handling of the aid, writing that the ICFTU Secretariat's patronizing attitude of premature dispatch of the international trade union delegation, and "imprudent" publication by the ORIT of the financial support given to the Venezuelan free trade unionists greatly irked them.[109] He said events not only strengthened the Catholic and Communist trade unionists who urged Venezuelan labor movement to break away from the ICFTU and ORIT, but even alienated some elements within the CTV/AD group, who felt attracted to the proposals put forward by various Argentinean, Bolivian, Chilean, and Cuban workers to form a new Latin American labor confederation that would exclude the US and Canadian unions.[110]

Fidel Castro's January 1959 triumph in Cuba reinforced the nationalistic temper of Latin American political and socioeconomic actors.[111] As with many other Latinos, many Center-Left and Left Venezuelans were attracted to the possibility of social reform and the sort of economic independence Fidel Castro's men had inaugurated; they thought their countries could arrive at similar results through the political and labor unity between Communists and non-Communists that they achieved in their country when they worked together to bring down Pérez Jiménez. An idea that had been presented at first as temporary and merely functional for the "patriotic defense"[112] of democracy suddenly seemed genuinely attractive to those who strove for unity and progress: This unity, they believed, would form the foundation for social justice and economic growth and could set a precedent for their Latin American counterparts.[113]

During the third national congress in November 1959, the CTV/AD group decided not to press for affiliation to the ICFTU and ORIT because it would have been opposed by the Communist and Catholic trade unions. It also agreed to a roundtable between the three continental workers' organizations—ORIT, the leftist CTAL, and the Catholic Latin American Workers Confederation (CLASC)—to discuss the possibilities of amalgamation and eventual creation of a "neutral" Latin

American organization. The CTAL and CLASC leaders responded favorably.[114] ORIT leaders, the Americans in particular, did not. They resented the "ungrateful" attitude of their former affiliate and could not understand how the CTV could even consider the possibility of ORIT participating in a meeting with "unrepresentative" (CLASC) and "totalitarian" (CTAL) organizations.[115]

Rómulo Betancourt also regretted the CTV stance on the international labor movement, but recommended that the ORIT maintain a nonintervention policy so that the Venezuelan free trade unionists could solve their internal conflicts alone. According to Betancourt, the end of labor unity and the subsequent return of the CTV to the ICFTU and ORIT was just a matter of time.[116] Indeed, a few months after the third congress, the Venezuelan labor movement fell prey to an internecine struggle between Communist and non-Communist trade unionists. The latter condemned radical unionist participation in the leftist insurgency (supported by Cuba) aimed at toppling Betancourt and establishing a Communist state. In December 1960, the CTV's fourth congress approved the expulsion of radical-Left members.[117]

The schism within the Venezuelan labor movement, which was facilitated by the severe government measures taken against the Left, removed the last obstacle to CTV affiliation to the international free trade union organizations. One argument supporting the renewal of CTV membership to the ICFTU/ORIT was to avoid isolation. The International Policy Committee of the Confederation's fourth congress considered it "necessary and urgent for the CTV to begin studying ways of extricating the Venezuelan labor movement from its present international isolation which prevented it from intervening in the problems which are discussed on the international level of the working class."[118] In July 1962, the ICFTU Executive Board accepted the CTV's request for affiliation to the international free labor movement.[119] Its relations with the Cuban trade unions were frozen and the plans for a roundtable for the creation of a new and neutral Latin American labor confederation abandoned.[120]

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the AFL/AFL-CIO and ORIT activity in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela to illustrate the complex relationship between the US and Latin American unions. Anticommunism played an early important role in this relationship, but it was by no means the sole motivation for inter-American labor cooperation. Instrumentalist considerations played a crucial role. In the Andes region, the trade unions that sought contact with the AFL/AFL-CIO and ORIT were all non-Communist but not necessarily anti-Communist. With their participation in the free labor movement, the unions wanted to achieve more than purely anti-Communist action. Many of the Andean leaders were pro-United States, but this did not imply subordination. The correspondence between Andean and US unionists evidences a critical stance toward their northern neighbors. Affiliation to the ORIT and the ICFTU responded to the interests of the Andean workers' organizations and not to the pressure exerted by the US unions.

In Bolivia, moderate members within COB were inclined to accept the invitations of the ORIT. The COB's top man, Juan Lechín, was not in principle opposed to affiliation with the ORIT but was fully aware of the "anti-Yanquí" sentiments among many COB leaders and rank-and-file unionists. The AFL/AFL-CIO's and ORIT's support of the government's stabilization plans that were severely criticized by the Bolivian workers, the miners in particular, interred the possibility of COB becoming part of the inter-American free labor movement. Pro-ORIT dissidents from the Bolivian trade union center that attempted to establish a parallel labor confederation failed and the COB remained as the sole labor organization in Bolivia: a great achievement in a region with such a fragmented labor movement. To date, COB has remained independent of international affiliation.[121]

In Ecuador and Venezuela, too, cooperation with US unions and affiliation to the free trade union movement was the result of self-interest rather than AFL/AFL-CIO pressure. In the first case, undermining the leftist CTE and the Catholic CEDOC, as well as obtaining technical and financial aid for the strengthening of the Ecuadorian free trade unions, took priority. Despite the tendency of many first-generation CEOSL leaders to regard the US unions, ORIT, and the ITSs as financing institutions, there was a group (small at first) within the Ecuadorian labor movement who felt the necessity of establishing a modern labor movement, independent of political parties, the Catholic Church, and international trade union organizations. Integration in the free labor movement offered them this opportunity.

In Venezuela, the unions of the CTV agreed to affiliation with the inter-American labor organizations (first CIT and then ORIT) but were much more critical and demanding than their Ecuadorian counterparts. An important concession by the US unions, CIT, and ORIT was to respect the close relationship between the AD party and the CTV. Working in exile or clandestinely, the Venezuelans succeeded in convincing the US and inter-American labor leaders of the necessity for going beyond pure trade union activities to combat the military dictatorship that ruled the country between 1948 and 1958. Moreover, the free trade union leaders of the continent were compelled to tolerate cooperation with Communist unions when the CTV thought it necessary to achieve its goals.

The cases presented in this chapter suggest that the relationship between the US unions, the ORIT, and workers' organizations from the Andes region was more symmetrical than is generally accepted. The US unions often employed blackmail tactics—threatening to stop financial contributions or technical aid, or to render support to other, more "friendly" trade unionists—to push through their ideas within the free labor movement. So did Latin American unions. Since they lacked the financial and diplomatic power to persuade their northern neighbors to adopt more moderate positions with regard to politics and socioeconomic issues, they often used political-psychological pressure. Two favorite strategies were the inflation of Communist danger in their respective countries or within the whole region, and threats to withdraw from the ORIT and to form a new Latin American labor confederation that would exclude the US and Canadian unions. It was in the interest of both US and Andean labor leaders to find a modus vivendi within the inter-American free trade union movement.

Notes

1. Special thanks to Robert Waters for his help with archival sources and useful reading suggestions, and to Paul Bullard for his language corrections.
2. The ICFTU was founded after the non-Communist unions within the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU, established in 1945) claimed it was dominated by Soviet unions. The ICFTU united non-Communist trade union organizations of 51 countries and territories. It was dissolved in 2006, following the foundation of the International Trade Union Confederation. In 2008, the ORIT was replaced by the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas. For a comprehensive history of the ICFTU, see Marcel van der Linden, et al., *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000).
3. See, for example, Laurence Burgorgue, "L'ORIT et la CLAT: deux acteurs régionaux de la competition syndicale en Amérique latine," in *Syndicalisme: Dimensions internationals*, ed., G. Devin, (La Garenne-Colombes, France: Guillaume, 1990); Anthony Carew, "Towards a Free Trade Union Centre: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (1949–1972)," in *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions*; Jon V. Kofas, *The Struggle for Legitimacy: Latin American Labor and the United States 1930–1960* (Tempe, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1992); Jack Scott, *Yankee Unions Go Home: How the AFL Helped the U.S. Build an Empire in Latin America* (Vancouver, BC: New Star, 1978); Hobart A. Spalding, "US Labor Intervention in Latin America: The Case of the American Institute for Free Labor Development," in *Trade Unions and the New Industrialization of the Third World,* ed., Roger Southall (London: Zed Books, 1988).
4. Kofas, 289, 347.
5. Robert J. Alexander, *A History of Organized Labor in Bolivia* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005); Ibid., *A History of Organized Labor in Peru and Ecuador* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007); Ibid., *International Labor Organizations and Organized Labor in Latin America and the Caribbean: A History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009); Ibid., *The Venezuelan Democratic Revolution: A Profile of the Regime of Rómulo Betancourt* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1964); Ibid., *Rómulo Betancourt and the Transformation of Venezuela* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1982); Ibid., *Venezuela's Voice for Democracy: Conversations and Correspondence with Rómulo Betancourt* (New York: Praeger, 1990).Alexander, a US scholar who often reported to the AFL on the labor situation in Latin American countries, conducted thousands of interviews with Latin American politicians, trade unionists, businessmen, military men, diplomats, and scholars. For an overview of his interview collection, see J. D. French, "The Robert J. Alexander Interview Collection," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84 (2004).
6. Serafino Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons: Recollections of a Labor Ambassador in Latin America* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967).
7. The AFL's rival, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, supported the CTAL as a way to end its isolation in the international arena caused by the AFL's insistence on maintaining the IFTU principle of one affiliate per country. At first, the CTAL followed the line of Popular Front parties. It strove for a coalition of Latin American unions of different leftist trends. But the CTAL was immediately identified with the international Communist movement, and especially with Latin American Communist parties. It became very successful among Latino workers before, during, and immediately after the Second World War. J. P. Windmuller, *The International Trade Union Movement* (Deventer, the Netherlands: Springer, 1980), 132–134. See also Daniela Spenser, "Vicente Lombardo Toledano envuelto en antagonismos internacionales," *Revista Izquierdas* 3 (2009); Lourdes Quintanilla Obregón, *Lombardismo*

y sindicatos en América Latina (México DF: Ediciones Nueva Sociologia, 1982); Kofas, 249–287.

8. Luis Alberto Monge, *Mirando a nuestra América* (México DF: ORIT, 1953), 15; Ian Roxborough, "The Urban Working Class and Labor Movement in Latin America since 1930," in *The Cambridge History of Latin America – Latin American since 1930: Economy, Society and Politics*, ed., Leslie Bethell, 333–334, 341 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
9. Magaly Rodríguez García, "Constructing Labor Regionalism in Europe and the Americas, 1920s-1970s," *International Review of Social History* (forthcoming).
10. R.D. Anderson, "Mexico," in *Latin American Labor Organizations* eds, Gerald M. Greenfield and Sheldon L. Maram, 520 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1987); M.L. Mussot López and G. González Cruz, "En la posguerra. Reestructuración de la CTM y formación de un nuevo proyecto sindical," in *Historia de la CTM 1936–1990*, ed., Javier Aguilar García (México DF: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1990).
11. ICFTU archive, folder 4971: Romualdi to J. H. Oldenbroek (ICFTU), April 20, 1950; Romualdi to Oldenbroek, May 18, 1950; Romualdi to Oldenbroek, May 20, 1950; O. Molina García, *El Sindicato Interamericano, 50 Años (1951–2001) de su Acción Social y Política*, (Caracas: ORIT, 2001), 31–32.
12. George Meany Memorial Archive, Silver Spring, MD, RG 18–009 Serafino Romualdi Files [henceforth, GMMA, Romualdi Files], Series 3, folder 7/7: Fidel Velázquez to Oldenbroek, September 21, 1950; Romualdi, 116.
13. "Wrijvingen tussen Latijns—en Engelssprekende Amerikanen," *Algemeen Handelsblad* 5 (1951).
14. According to Romualdi, 114, "Mexican labor's sponsorship of the CGT had been decided with the knowledge and consent—if not at the urging—of the Mexican government…A rebuke to the CGT, whose close ties with Perón were well known, was considered by the Mexican government as a direct affront to the head of the Argentine state."
15. Pedro Reiser, *L'Organization Régionale Interaméricaine de Travailleurs (O.R.I.T.) de la Confédération Internationale des Syndicats Libres (C.I.S.L.) de 1951 à 1961* (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1962), 48; Romualdi, 117–118; Ben Stephansky, oral history interview, Georgetown University, October 8, 1992, 19.
16. ICFTU archive, folio 4973: ORIT—A Progress Report (Confidential), Brussels, ICFTU, 1954, 1; "IVVV Congres te Mexico geëindigd," *Volksgazet*, January 16, 1951; "Oprichting van een Regionaal Secretariaat van het IVVV," *Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant*, February 1, 1951; Molina García, 33–35, 39.
17. ICFTU archive, folder 5167: Robert J. Alexander to Serafino Romualdi, September 2, 1951, 3.
18. ICFTU archive, folder 4999: Inter-American Regional Organization (O.R.I.T.) of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (I.C.F.T.U.)—Constitution, 1951, 4; ORIT—A Progress Report (Confidential); I.W.F. Brandt and W.G.'t Hart, *De internationale vrije vakbeweging (IVVV en ORIT)* in *Latijns Amerika van 1950 tot 1960* (PhD diss., Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam), 1979), 58–59.
19. ICFTU archive, folder 5167: Hermes Horne (ICFTU) to Ernst Schwarz (CIO), October 31, 1952.
20. At the beginning of the 1950s, Argentinean and Mexican trade unions from the CROM attempted to unite Latin American unionists who followed the Peronist opposition to both communism and capitalism. They established the *Agrupación de Trabajadores Latinoamericanos* (ATLAS) in 1952, but the organization failed to survive the fall of Argentinean president Juan Domingo Perón in 1955. For the history of ATLAS, see Claudio Panella, *Perón y ATLAS: Historia de una central latinoamericana*

de trabajadores inspirada en los ideales del Justicialismo (Buenos Aires: Editorial Vinciguerra, 1996).

21. ICFTU archive, folder 5167: Oldenbroek to Trifón Gómez (ICFTU), September 9, 1952; GMMA, Romualdi Files, Series 3, folder 7/7: Oldenbroek to Romualdi, October 7, 1952; Oldenbroek to Fidel Velázquez, November 20, 1952; Alexander to Romualdi, 4.
22. Romualdi, 120.
23. Javier Aguilar García, "En un período de unidad monolítica, Consolidación del sindicalismo institucional, 1953–1957," in, *Historia de la CTM*, ed., Aguilar García, 354.
24. Alexander, *International Labor Organizations*, 99.
25. Romualdi, 42.
26. ICFTU archive, folder 4971: Romualdi to Oldenbroek, May 18, 1950.
27. The MNR was a populist political party with a vague nationalist and reformist program, founded in 1941. Between 1946 and 1952, it developed a broad social coalition that offered an alternative to Marxist tendencies within the Bolivian labor movement. For a critical analysis of the MNR, see Mitchell Christopher, *The Legacy of Populism in Bolivia: From the MNR to Military Rule* (New York: Praeger, 1977).
28. ICFTU archive, folder 5359: Víctor Daza, Comprobación objetiva de que el sindicalismo en Bolivia ha sido subordinado a la acción política de los partidos totalitarios en forma descarada desde 1940 (bosquejo sintético para la ORIT), La Paz, Confederación Boliviana de Trabajadores, November 20, 1951, 2–7.
29. ICFTU archive, folder 5359: "Datos de la CBT," May 1951; Daza, . . bosquejo sintético para la ORIT, 3. Lechín's ideology was very vague. In his early days as labor leader, he sympathized with the Trotskyite party *Partido Obrero Revolucionario* (POR); after the foundation of the reformist MNR in 1941, he oscillated between the nationalist-centrism of the MNR and POR. For Lechín's biography, see Lupe Cajías, *Historia de Una Leyenda: Vida Y Palabra de Juan Lechín, Líder de Los Mineros Bolivianos* (La Paz: Ediciones Graficas "EG," 1989).
30. Guillermo Lora, *A History of the Bolivian Labor Movement* (Cambridge, 1977), 276.
31. ICFTU archive, folder 5359: Luis López to Francisco Aguirre, April 14, 1952; Ibid., April 16, 1952.
32. Steve Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela 1958–1991: Behavior and Concerns in a Democratic Setting* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1993), 1–2, describes AD as a "typical Latin American populist party" with a "radical program of income distribution" but no clearly defined long-term goals. Its popular appeal during its first years of existence was to a considerable degree based on the "charismatic qualities of its *jefe máximo*," Rómulo Betancourt. See also, Ellner, "Populism in Venezuela, 1935–1948: Betancourt and Acción Democrática," in *Latin American Populism in Comparative Perspective,* ed., Michael Conniff (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1982).
33. Romualdi, 75, 434–439.
34. Ellner, "Venezuela," in *Cambridge History of Latin America – Latin America between the Second World War and the Cold War, 1944–1948,* eds., Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 159–161 (quotation, 161).
35. COG was founded in 1905 under strong anarcho-syndicalist influence. It developed later toward a more liberal-conservative position. J. Durán Barba, "Orígenes del movimiento obrero artesanal," in Enrique Ayala Mora, ed., *Nueva Historia del Ecuador* vol. 6 (Quito: Corporacíon Editoria Nacional, 1988), 179.
36. ICFTU archive, folder 5447: Edmundo Mestanza y Alava and Eusebio Sánchez (COG) to Oldenbroek, May 18, 1951; Hermes Horne (ICFTU) to Eusebio Sánchez, September 5, 1951; Edmundo Mestanza y Alava and Eusebio Sánchez to Oldenbroek, October 25, 1951; Oldenbroek to Eusebio Sánchez, December 10, 1951.

37. ICFTU archive, folder 5447: Confederación Obrera del Guayas-Junta Provincial cumple cincuenta y dos años de vida institucional luchando contra el comunismo; Síntesis de su labor, Guayaquil, COG, 1957; Alexander, *A History of Organized Labor in Peru and Ecuador*, 181–182.
38. ICFTU archive, folder 5324: Summary of Mr. Salvador Carrillo's report of his mission to South America for the ICFTU/ORIT and of Monge's covering letter, August 19, 1953, 6; folder 5444: Informe sobre la misión al Ecuador de Leopoldo Pita, May–July 1955, 1–3.
39. ICFTU archive, folder 5444: Romualdi to Monge, March 5, 1958; Informe sobre la visita al Ecuador de Arturo Jáuregui; December 4, 1958, 5–7, 10–14.
40. G. Devin, "La Confédération International des Syndicats Libres (CISL): exploration d'un réseau," in Devin, 77; Spalding, 270.
41. ICFTU archive, folder 5444: Report on Ecuador from Daniel Benedict—Confidential, March 29, 1959, 1–2.
42. *Historia de la CEOSL: Los primeros 25 años 1962–1987* (Quito: CEOSL, 1987), 15; Patricio Ycaza, *Historia del movimiento obrero ecuatoriano* (Quito: Centro de Documentación e Información de los Movimientos Sociales del Ecuador, 1991), 189.
43. ICFTU archive, folder 4977: Julio Etcheverry to Rafael Otero Borlaff, January 22, 1961; folder 5447: Carlos Villalobos (COG) to Etcheverry, January 26, 1960; folder 5444: Report on Ecuador from Daniel Benedict, 2.
44. ICFTU archive, folder 5445: Founding Congress of the Confederación Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres (CEOSL), Quito, April 28—May 1, 1962, 1; Ycaza, 195–6; Historia de la CEOSL, 19.
45. Romualdi, 70.
46. Kofas, 225.
47. Ibid., 230.
48. M. Aguirre, Statement to the Third Assembly of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank, Buenos Aires, April 5–11, 1962, 2–4; *La ORIT: sus programas y sus realizaciones*, (Mexico DF: ORIT, 1962), 49–50.
49. Informe del Segundo Congreso de la Organización Regional Interamericana de Trabajadores (ORIT): acuerdos y resoluciones, Rio de Janeiro, 12–17 de diciembre de 1953; Molina García, 51–52.
50. Reiser, 57, 60.
51. ICFTU archive, folder 5359: Report on Labor Affairs, Bolivia, 1952, by J. G. Lomax, Her Majesty's Ambassador, June 15, 1953, p. 4; Kofas, 234.
52. Cajías, 173–176.
53. ICFTU archive, folder 5364: Augusto Malavé to Arturo Jáuregui, November 28, 1954; folder 5359: Luis Alberto Monge to Oldenbroek, September 30, 1957; Reiser, 120, 127.
54. Cajías, 247.
55. ICFTU archive, folder 5445: Founding Congress of the Confederación Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres (C.E.O.S.L.), Quito, April 28—May 1, 1962, 2.
56. For a critical analysis of AIFLD's activities in Latin America, see Spalding.
57. Jorge Oviedo, "El movimiento obrero ecuatoriano entre 1960 y 1985," in *Nueva Historia del Ecuador,* 232; Ycaza, 197–199; Adolf Sturmthal, "Industrial Relation Strategies," in *The International Labor Movement in Transition,* eds., Adolf Sturmthal and James G. Scoville, 5 (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1973); Alexander, *A History of Organized Labor in Peru and Ecuador*, 189.
58. The exact amount of these contributions to COG is not clear. Some documents state US $175 per month while others speak of $416. ICFTU archive, folder 5447: Ampliación del informe que la comisión fiscalizadora y la comisión de mesa presentaron a la junta de delegaciones de la Confederación Obrera del Guayas, 1957, 1–3; Carlos Villalobos and Eusebio Sánchez to the IV Continental Congress of the O.R.I.T., December 9, 1958, 1.

59. ICFTU archive, folder 5444: Arturo Jáuregui to Omer Becu (ICFTU), February 14, 1963; folder 5445: Victor Contreras (CEOSL) to Omer Becu, April 5, 1962; Tom Bavin (IFPAAW) to ICFTU Brussels, July 27, 1961.
60. ICFTU archive, folder 5444: Marco Hirigoyen (ORIT) Report on activities in Ecuador, June 1–15, 1964, 3; *Historia de la CEOSL*, 28; Philip Agee, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1975) provides a detailed description of the CIA infiltration not only in CEOSL but also in the Catholic labor confederation, CEDOC.
61. In an interview with a student of the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO), Matías Ulloa admitted that he was not an active trade union leader prior to the CEOSL's foundation. His involvement with the free trade union movement and later appointment as general-secretary was in his own view, "a rare coincidence." He had received an invitation from a Catholic inter-professional trade union to attend the CEOSL founding congress. Agee claims that Ulloa's appointment was the work of the CIA. L. Efraín Redrován Zúñiga, "La formación del Frente Unitario de Trabajadores (1960–1975). El papel de la Confederación Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres—CEOSL," Quito, FLACSO, 1983, 67, www.flacsoandes.org/dspace/bitstream/10469/572/4/TFLACSO-02-1983LERZ.pdf, accessed on May 3, 2012; J. Galarza, Entrevista a Philip Agee, Quito, Movimiento Segunda Independencia, 1976, 28, quoted in Ycaza, 197.
62. Author's interview with José Chávez, CEOSL general-secretary (and later president) since 1974, Quito, December 19, 2000; *Historia de la CEOSL*, 33.
63. ICFTU archive, folder 5445: Matías Ulloa to Arturo Jáuregui, September 11, 1965; Ibid., October 8, 1965; Ibid., June 21, 1966; El Comité Ejecutivo de la Confederación Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones Sindicales Libres—CEOSL—a todas sus federaciones filiales y organismos de base, June 12, 1966.
64. ICFTU archive, folder 5445: Arturo Jáuregui to Matías Ulloa, September 30, 1965; folder 5446: Ibid., July 18, 1966; folder 4991: Minutes ORIT Executive Committee Meeting, Kingston, October 21–22, 1965.
65. ICFTU archive, folder 5444: Arturo Jáuregui to Becu, February 14, 1963, 3.
66. ICFTU archive, folder 5446: Con el quorum reglamentario prosiguió labores el tercer Congreso de la CEOSL, Guayaquil, COG-JP, December 4, 1966, 1–2; *Historia de la CEOSL*, 33–4.
67. Interview with José Chávez; *Historia de la CEOSL*, 47; Oviedo, "El movimiento obrero ecuatoriano entre 1960 y 1985," 232–233; Ycaza, 251–252.
68. R. Gumbrell-McCormick, "Facing New Challenges: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (1972–1990s)," in van der Linden, *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions,* 458–460.
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70. Victor Alba, *Politics and the Labor Movement in Latin America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1968), 274–275.
71. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Situación política de Venezuela, San José, November 10, 1951, 1–2; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 2–3, 114; Reiser, 73–74, 86–87, 101.
72. Kheel Center for Labor Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library, Serafino Romualdi Papers 1946–1966 [henceforth, "Romualdi Papers"], Series I, box 7, folder 1: A communication from the Confederation of Workers of Venezuela (Underground), July 24, 1950. N. Valticos, *International Labor Law* (Deventer, the Netherlands: Springer, 1979), 31.
73. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Augusto Malavé to Hermes Horne, November 17, 1951; A. Vermeulen, Report of the I.C.F.T.U.-Mission to Venezuela, n.l., 1952, 1.
74. Julio Godio, *El movimiento obrero venezolano, 1945–1964* (Caracas: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales, 1985), 103.

75. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Oldenbroek to David Morse (ILO Director), April 25, 1952; Romualdi, 455–456.
76. ICFTU archive, folder 5489: Oldenbroek to Augusto Malavé, September 8, 1952.
77. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 7: Romualdi to Betancourt, May 16, 1952; Romualdi Papers, Series IV, box 10, folder 10: Monge to Aguirre, September 16, 1952; Romualdi, 455–456.
78. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 7: Betancourt to Romualdi, June 4, 1952; ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Malavé to Aguirre, June 17, 1952; folder 5489: Oldenbroek to Malavé, September 8, 1952.
79. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Horne to Oldenbroek, June 5, 1952; Vermeulen, Report of the I.C.F.T.U.-Mission to Venezuela, 2–3; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 7: Romualdi to Betancourt, June 26, 1952.
80. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: B.J. Schafer to O.A. Knight (CIO), October 29, 1952.
81. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Ad Vermeulen to the Cabinet Council of Venezuela and to the attention of His Excellency the Minister of Labor, September 30, 1952.
82. ICFTU archive, folder 5483a: Confidential—Labor in Venezuela, 1953, 3; Vermeulen, Report of the I.C.F.T.U.-Mission to Venezuela, 4–5, 17–18.
83. Romualdi Papers, Series IV, box 10, folder 10: Monge to Romualdi, April 18, 1950; ICFTU archive, folder 4972: L. A. Monge, Memorandum confidencial, 1951, 2; Monge to Jef Rens (ILO assistant director-general), September 11, 1951.
84. Romualdi Papers, Series IV, box 10, folder 10: Monge to Aguirre, May 9, 1951; Romualdi to Monge, May 15, 1951; Monge to Romualdi, May 17, 1951.
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86. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 7: Rómulo Betancourt to Serafino Romualdi, July 1, 1952.
87. ICFTU archive, folder 5489: Malavé, et al., Memorandum sobre la ayuda al movimiento sindical democrático de Venezuela para realizar dentro del país un trabajo efectivo de reorganización obrera, San José, March 23, 1954; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 7: Rómulo Betancourt to Serafino Romualdi, November 4, 1952.
88. Vermeulen, Report of the I.C.F.T.U.-Mission to Venezuela, 15.
89. Malavé, Memorandum sobre la ayuda al movimiento sindical democrático, n.p.
90. Ibid.
91. However, the gains obtained from the economic prosperity were not distributed equally; many workers resented the immigration policy of the Pérez Jiménez administration, which encouraged the flow of Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish workers who took many of the jobs in the booming construction industry. Ellner, "Venezuela," in Greenfield & Maram, *Latin American Labor Organizations*, 732; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 2–3.
92. Malavé, Memorandum sobre la ayuda al movimiento sindical democrático.
93. Confidential—Labor in Venezuela, 3.
94. ICFTU archive, folder 5489: Luis Alberto Monge to Oldenbroek, March 31, 1954.
95. ICFTU archive, folder 5489: Roldán Bermúdez to Luis Alberto Monge, February 24, 1954.
96. ICFTU archive, folder 5483b: Jacobus H. Oldenbroek to P.J. Rojas (CNT General-Secretary), April 20, 1955; Romualdi, 459.
97. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 4: "AFL-CIO refuse to attend Venezuela ILO meeting," in *Inter-American Labor Bulletin* V (1955); Romualdi, 46–47.
98. ICFTU archive, folder 5483b: Speech A. Vermeulen, representative of the Workers' Group of the Governing Body of the ILO at the Conference of Petroleum Committee in Caracas, April 25, 1955.

99. Romualdi, 468.
100. Venezuela rejoined the ILO in 1958, after the overthrow of the military junta. Member States of the ILO (180)—with dates of admission www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/mstatese.htm, accessed on May 3, 2012.
101. ICFTU archive, folder 5490: Malavé to Oldenbroek, May 6, 1955.
102. ICFTU archive, folder 5483c: Malavé to Romualdi, January 24, 1958; Pérez Salinas to Oldenbroek, January 30, 1958.
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104. Pérez Salinas to Oldenbroek, January 30, 1958.
105. Judith Ewell, "Venezuela since 1930," in *Cambridge History of Latin America – Latin America since 1930: Spanish South America*, 752–754; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 4–5.
106. ICFTU archive, folder 5483c: Malavé to Oldenbroek, February 3, 1958.
107. ICFTU archive, folder 5483c: Jim Bury (ORIT) to Oldenbroek, February 1, 1958.
108. ICFTU archive, folder 5483c: Charles Millard to Oldenbroek, February 14, 1958; Eusebio Mujal to Oldenbroek, February 24, 1958; C.A. Bryer, Venezuela—Labor Report, Mexico City, British Embassy, May 1958, 7; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 8: Romualdi to Betancourt, March 24, 1958. In March 1958, the ICFTU International Solidarity Fund also agreed to loan U.S. $25,000 to the CTV.
109. ICFTU archive, folder 5483d: Malavé to Millard, March 1, 1958; Memorandum sobre situación sindical, March 19, 1958; Romualdi to Millard, April 4, 1958; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: Millard to Romualdi, April 1, 1958.
110. ICFTU archive, folder 5484: J.M. Aguirre, Informe confidencial: viaje a Caracas para la toma presidencial de Betancourt, February 20, 1959, 6, 14; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 8: R.J. Alexander, The reconstruction of the Venezuelan labor movement, 1958, 3–4.
111. William E. Ratliff, *Castroism and Communism in Latin America: The Varieties of Marxist-Leninist Experience* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976), 2–4, 29.
112. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: P. Pérez Salinas, Present Trade Union Situation in Venezuela—Report for ORIT, February 19, 1958, 1.
113. Ibid.; ICFTU archive, folder 5490: Manuel Pavón (ORIT representative to the 3rd Workers' Congress of Venezuela) to Alfonso Sánchez Madariaga (ORIT), November 28, 1959, 1, 5; Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: Mensaje del compañero José González Navarro, de Venezuela [a la AFL-CIO] (1959); Malavé to Romualdi, March 1, 1960; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 13–14.
114. ICFTU archive, folder 5490: Malavé to Millard, January 11, 1960; E. Máspero, CLASC pone condiciones para participar en la mesa redonda propuesta por la CTV, March 8, 1960; folder 5484: González Navarro and Pérez Salinas to Sánchez Madariaga, January 21, 1960; Godio, 215.
115. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: David Sternback (AFL-CIO) to George Meany, November 30, 1959; Sánchez Madariaga to González Navarro and Pérez Salinas, February 17, 1960; Romualdi to Malavé, March 14, 1960.
116. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: Romualdi to Meany, October 30, 1960; Romualdi to Malavé, January 16, 1961.
117. Romualdi Papers, Series I, box 7, folder 2: El Consejo General de la Confederación de Trabajadores de Venezuela, reunido en Caracas durante los días 16, 17 y 18 de Diciembre de 1960, Caracas, 19 December 1960; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 114; Godio, 227, 246.

118. ICFTU archive, folder 5491: "Workers recommend affiliation to the ICFTU," *Andamio*, December 18, 1961.
119. ICFTU archive, folder 5491: Pedro Pérez Salinas to Becu, November 24, 1962; ICFTU EB, Brussels, July 12, 1962, n.p.
120. Alba, 328; Ellner, *Organized Labor in Venezuela*, 20.
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Chapter Nine
More Subtle than We Knew: The AFL in the British Caribbean

Robert Anthony Waters, Jr.

The first thing that comes to mind when most of us think about the AFL-CIO's Cold War foreign policy is the reflexive anticommunism of its leaders such as George Meany, the honest plumber who quickly turned from fighting Nazis to fighting Communists, and the man who tutored him on the international Communist conspiracy, Jay Lovestone. Lovestone was the former leader of the Communist Party USA. By the 1950s, he had become such an anti-Communist that he called the CIA a bunch of "fizz kids" because their anticommunism lacked seriousness in analysis and operation.[1]

The consensus among historians has it that Meany, Lovestone, and their Third World labor agents allowed anticommunism to blind them to the reality of colonialism, racism, and despotism that were the real causes of leftist political and labor movements, and which led them to see Communists when in fact they were looking at nationalists. This is most famously true in the Western Hemisphere, where the infamous American Federation of Labor and then AFL-CIO interventions in places such as Guatemala, British Guiana,[2] Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Chile, and El Salvador did much to sully the union's reputation. In British Honduras though, the AFL opposed British intervention, arguing that the British imperialists were trying to create a Red Scare to justify overthrowing an almost rabidly anticolonial but not pro-Communist government—ironically, an argument similar to the criticism leveled at the AFL-CIO for its intervention in British Guiana a decade later. This chapter will use these outlying provinces of the British Caribbean as test cases to analyze the AFL's policy, showing the criteria its Latin American specialists used for differentiating between nationalist and Communist, and how they applied them.

The AFL in British Guiana

Thanks to Stephen Rabe's much praised *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story*,[3] diplomatic and labor historians have become familiar with the British

Guiana case, where the AFL conspired to stop the People's Progressive Party (PPP) government of Cheddi Jagan from taking control of the free labor movement. Jagan was young, radical, and movie-star handsome. He grew up despising how sugar and the men he called the "sugar lords" ran a "sugar-coated government" that brutally exploited Guianese sugar workers. His wife, the former Janet Rosenberg of Chicago, was a former member of the Young Communist League. She gave her husband a global perspective in which to understand the imperialism behind "bitter sugar." Both were in their thirties, as was virtually every PPP leader.[4]

From 1951 until Jagan's removal by the British 133 days after his government came to power in 1953, and then from Jagan's election in 1957 until his fall in 1964 following elections designed to remove him, the AFL and then the AFL-CIO were Jagan's implacable opponents that organized and assisted opposition labor unions. They spent over $1 million to stop him with money funneled by the CIA.[5]

The AFL man who was Cheddi Jagan's nemesis was the union's Latin American "ambassador" and assistant secretary of the multinational Inter-American Regional Labor Organization (known by its Spanish initials, ORIT) Serafino Romualdi. Romualdi was an Italian who had fled Mussolini's Fascism. He hated totalitarians of all stripes, from Peronistas to Stalinists.[6] Romualdi went to British Guiana in 1951 and 1953 to investigate reports that the Jagan-supported sugar-workers' union, the Guiana Industrial Workers' Union (GIWU), was challenging the Man-Power Citizens' Association (MPCA), the officially recognized sugar-workers' union supported by the anti-Communist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), ORIT (the ICFTU's regional branch), and the AFL. As in the rest of the British Caribbean, Jagan's union was tied to a political party, his PPP.

Romualdi was appalled by what he found in British Guiana, although Stephen Rabe's depiction is milquetoast:

> The leader of the [MPCA] sugar workers' union . . . had ties to U.S. and British union officials and warned them that the Man Power Citizens' Association was being threatened by Communists. They further averred that Cheddi Jagan associated with the now Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions. Romualdi accepted their arguments and became a dedicated foe of the Jagans.[7]

Following Romualdi's 1951 visit, the AFL sent Robert Alexander, a Rutgers University political scientist whose specialty was Latin American labor and communism. Alexander was a democratic Socialist and a strong anti-Communist.[8] Rabe writes that Alexander concluded that Cheddi and Janet Jagan were Communists, that Janet had been a member of the Young Communist League while attending college in the United States, and that she dominated her husband.[9] As to how Alexander reached his conclusions, Rabe writes dismissively: "The political scientist offered no hard evidence to substantiate his conclusions. His method of inquiry was to talk to Guyanese."[10]

Rabe's depiction of the methodology followed by Alexander and Romualdi certainly fits the popular template for the AFL's Cold War foreign policy—without

fear or research, the AFL leadership had concluded that the Jagans were Communists deserving of the most unflagging opposition. By Rabe's account, British Guiana was an archetypical example of thoughtless AFL intervention in the Western Hemisphere: Romualdi and Alexander ignored or never bothered to learn about the colony's history of cruel and bitter sugar. They mistook for Communists anticolonial nationalists, who were no doubt florid and radical from the hotheadedness of youth, but were also democratic and Socialist.

Yet, at the same time, across the Caribbean in Central America, a seemingly similar drama was playing out. There the British and the local establishment also proclaimed that Communists threatened a British colony. Just as in British Guiana, Winston Churchill's Conservative government labeled as subversives the leading political party in British Honduras—the People's United Party (PUP), led by George Price—and the leading union—the General Workers' Union (GWU), led by Nicholas Pollard.[11]

Radical Nationalism or Communism in British Honduras?

British Honduras was Great Britain's only Central American colony. A tiny sliver of land the size of Wales that abuts Guatemala and Mexico, most of its roughly 70,000 people lived in poverty. Unlike the rest of the British Caribbean, British Honduras produced no sugar and most of its working population were lumbermen or owned small plots of land that they tilled for subsistence. Hondurans had a much weaker tie with the mother country than did the rest of the British Caribbean, thanks to its remote location, malarial climate, and lack of sugar. The result was a sense of independent-mindedness among its disparate peoples—British, Blacks and Mulattos (known locally as Creole), East Indians, Mayan and Mestizo whose ancestors had fled from Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, Mexican Mennonite refugees, Caribs from Caribbean islands, and indigenous Amerindians. Language further fragmented the colony: Creoles in the capital, Belize, and many Caribs spoke English, assimilated to British ways, and saw themselves as part of the British Caribbean, while the Mayans were Hispanicized and saw themselves as Central Americans. Colonists traded mostly within the Western Hemisphere, the middle class was educated at a Roman Catholic high school (Honduran schools were affiliated to a church) by Irish-American Jesuits who were followers of an activist social Catholic theology, and the people played American games and preferred American music. Thus, even the Anglicized peoples of British Honduras felt no great kinship with their mother country.[12]

Further complicating the political scene was Guatemala's sometimes aggressive claim to the colony, which dated back to charges that the British had not fulfilled an 1869 treaty. It was an open question whether the colony's rural Hispanicized minority would prefer Guatemalan rule to British, and at least a few British Honduran PUP and GWU members flirted with the Guatemalans. The idea was not as preposterous as it sounds today. President Juan José Arévalo was Guatemala's first democratically elected leader in 1944, and he had begun social reforms of the sort demanded by Honduran political and labor leaders. Arévalo also demanded that the British "return" British Honduras to Guatemala,

which the British refused to do, so Arévalo closed the border and raised his rhetoric. His successor, Jacobo Árbenz, dramatically expanded these policies, pushing more aggressively for control of British Honduras. Árbenz also incurred the wrath of the US government for adding Communists to his governing coalition, for making his country a haven for Communist exiles and refugees from throughout Latin America, and for expropriating huge tracts of land from the US-owned and remarkably well-connected United Fruit Company. So the Guatemalan question in Honduran politics morphed into a Communist question.[13]

British Honduran nationalism exploded on December 31, 1949, when the British governor unilaterally devalued the British Honduran dollar, which had been pegged to the US dollar. Unemployment doubled by March and inflation hit most colonists hard. The GWU responded by teaming up with young middle-class Catholic reformers to found the PUP, the colony's first political party. On April 28, the reformers took over the GWU at its annual meeting, largely subordinating it to the PUP. The two leaderships became all but interchangeable although the union continued its labor role, fomenting strikes and negotiating employment agreements.[14]

Bitter protests and rhetoric followed the dollar devaluation and became the hallmark of PUP and GWU leaders and their movement. Supporters of the colonial government were "quislings," cried GWU vice president John Smith, a view reflected on a banner that led a procession during the national celebration, "Hitler disappeared from Europe, but his system remains in British Honduras." In February, leading nationalists petitioned the king, accusing his government of "colonial exploitation that takes abroad the wealth of our country, and leaves it impoverished and destitute." They warned the king that if he did not quickly grant greater self-rule as a step toward independence, "a spirit of dissatisfaction and potential rebellion may continue to seethe and grow." GWU and PUP rallies heckled the British by singing "God Bless America" instead of "God Save the King"—noted by both the British MI5 domestic intelligence agency and the CIA—and flew a blue and white "Belizean" flag, which symbolized Central American unity, instead of flying the British Union Jack. Anti-British feeling became so intense that the British cancelled a visit by Princess Alice of Athlone (at the time considered to be a very big deal).[15]

The nationalists' rhetoric was so harsh that the British Trades Union Congress (TUC), scourge of British industrialists, advised GWU leaders to tone it down and apologize after GWU president Henry Middleton replied to a letter from the local colonial secretary that had expressed reluctance to raise wages for unskilled employees until the "full effects" of the dollar devaluation had been assessed. Middleton wrote:

> Subterfuge and ambiguity drip from the foregoing sentences in quotation. . . . But we would venture to predict that Government's unwillingness to raise wages to the level of a minimum living wage would produce the fatal "full effects" of grovelling [*sic*] poverty, starvation and economic slavery—the outgrowth of colonial exploitation. And if Government's reluctance still persists the final, "full effects" would have to be estimated in terms of the graves and relics of a people.[16]

The nationalist attacks crescendoed in June 1951, when Leigh Richardson wrote in the nationalist *Belize Billboard* newspaper:

> Mr. [George] Price has told you that there are two roads to democracy—evolution and revolution. Your People's United Party will make a final attempt at bringing democracy through the evolutionary process. Revolution, he said, is right—if there is oppression. If there is a reasonable chance of success and if there is no possible alternative. That is theological teaching and that is the practice of history. . . . [T]he peoples of the British colonies can make war upon the British Parliament and peoples to force them to give the colonies their human rights. That is no murder. I defy any jurist to tell me that is murder.[17]

The following month, the governor dissolved the Belize City Council—at the time the most important elected body in the colony—when PUP members voted against displaying a portrait of the king. In October, the government tried Richardson and the owners of the *Billboard* for their seditious article. He and GWU assistant secretary Phillip Goldson were found guilty and sentenced to a year of hard labor. Security Service sources said their defense was paid for by the Guatemalan government.[18]

Guatemala was a constant British worry. Sources told MI5 that the Guatemalan government had subsidized PUP rallies and visits to Guatemala by PUP and GWU leaders, paid for pamphlets and Belizean flags that were distributed at rallies, and supported a British Honduran propaganda and espionage network. Guatemala also beamed radio broadcasts into the colony that called for the people of Belize to rise up against the "Nazi-Fascist-Imperialist" British and "finish them off before they finish you."[19]

Romualdi and Alexander in British Honduras

Serafino Romualdi and Robert Alexander knew that the British government and local grandees charged the GWU and PUP with working for the Árbenz government and taking its money. They also knew that opponents claimed the People's United Party was Communist-dominated and called it "another British Guiana P.P.P."[20]

Despite this criticism, and despite sharing the belief that the Árbenz government and the Guatemalan labor movement were Communist-dominated, Romualdi and Alexander both supported the PUP and the GWU beginning with Romualdi's first trip to the colony in October 1951. After this visit, Romualdi reported to Jay Lovestone about the GWU: "The new leaders are young, enthusiastic people who deserve every possible encouragement." Alexander followed Romualdi with a fact-finding mission in 1952, perhaps prompted by continued British allegations. He wrote that the GWU leaders were Catholics and "convinced anti-Communists" who had never joined any Communist fronts or been in contact with Guatemalan Communists. Alexander believed that while the nationalists were intemperate in the things they said and did and that their actions might have met the British definition of "sedition"—since they had "clashed rather bitterly" with local British authorities, refused to fly the Union Jack, and made themselves "conspicuous for

their opposition to British dinastic [sic] celebrations"—the AFL should support them nonetheless because theirs was not Communist sedition. Alexander's premise was that the AFL's business was opposing communism and supporting free labor. Propping up colonialism was not its concern.[21]

In April 1953, with Cheddi Jagan days away from leading his People's Progressive Party to victory in British Guiana, Romualdi visited British Honduras to speak at the General Workers' Union's tenth national convention. Romualdi also accompanied GWU leader Nicholas Pollard on a visit to the colonial governor where the two made "reference" to "a number" of the union's grievances, but Romualdi also criticized the union during the meeting, expressing his concern about the "adolescence" of its approach to labor relations, and agreeing with the governor that it should get out of politics. Governor Patrick Renison reported to the Colonial Office in London that "reliable sources" reported that during private meetings, Romualdi had "castigated" the union leadership for a litany of errors: Allowing themselves to become an "instrument of party politics," using tactics that alienated employers and "created opposition to what might otherwise have been regarded as legitimate claims," wasting money by sending delegates to international conferences when sending a resolution would be more effective and seen as more credible by other unions, and opening themselves to charges of disloyalty by singing "God Bless America" instead of "God Save the King." The result, Romuladi reportedly told GWU leaders: They had shaken the confidence of Latin American labor, which translated into only minimal support from the free trade union movement. Before departing British Honduras, Romualdi reportedly told the US consul that he left "with a heavy heart," and had concluded that the colony's labor movement was at barely a turn-of-the-century stage of development.[22]

Romualdi kept his criticism to himself when reporting to Lovestone, a perhaps hyper-vigilant anti-Communist:

> The General Workers Union is in complete agreement with the foreign policy of the AFL, is very friendly to the United States and is strongly anti-Communist, in spite of having been labeled "subversive" by the British Colonial Office.[23]

In the months that followed, Honduran nationalists reined in their anti-government rhetoric while periodically publicly attacking communism. The GWU announced that it would not be sending a delegate to a labor conference in Sweden and publicly defended itself from the charge that it was dangerously tied to the PUP, comparing their ties with the relationship between the British TUC and the Labor Party. The TUC responded that it was a distinctly different organization from Labor, with agenda that did not always overlap.[24]

Following removal of Jagan's government in British Guiana during October 1953, Romualdi returned to British Honduras. Once again he criticized the union for being too tightly affiliated with the PUP, but he also congratulated them for their progress since his April visit. He told a GWU public meeting that there was no danger of communism in British Honduras because their leaders were "good

people, religious people, morally sound, and in no danger of imitating the People's Progressive Party in British Guiana." Just as during his previous visit, Romualdi took a different tack privately, telling the American consul that he worried about the leadership's "lack of responsibility" and "lack of proportion." He added that, as a representative of the ORIT, he and the organization were "violently opposed to communism," but were "neutral to nationalist or anti-colonial tendencies in affiliated trade unions."[25]

In November, Romualdi again publicly defended the GWU, this time against charges in the conservative London *Daily Telegraph* that the government and labor movements in British Honduras were Jaganite clones controlled by Communist Guatemala who planned to unite with Guatemala once they achieved independence. ICFTU chief J. H. Oldenbroek cabled Romualdi, asking for his analysis. Romualdi cabled back that the story was "biased, greatly exaggerated. GWU definitely anti-communistic and so is PUP which strongly denies ties with Guatemala. Any comparison with Guiana's PPP simply absurd." At Romualdi's urgent request, GWU secretary general Nicholas Pollard wrote a lengthy rebuttal to the charges, noting that, in the previous year, the GWU had received donations totaling over US $1,500 from anti-Communist international unions and regional organizations: the AFL, the CIO, the ICFTU, the British TUC, and the ORIT. Pollard also wrote a public letter to the leader of British Guiana's anti-Jagan Man-Power Citizens' Association trade union, with a copy to the British TUC, expressing his union's "deepest sympathy" for the problems that Jagan's policies had visited upon British Guiana, and expressing the hope that "the truly democratic forces" in the colony would gather in "one united effort to free the country of those conditions which provide fertile ground for the growth of communism." British Honduras would not fall into such a trap, he wrote in a clear appeal to international opinion, because the GWU was "affiliated internationally with the O.R.I.T. and the I.C.F.T.U." and its leaders were "blessed with true Christian ideals and complete freedom from communist ideology and tactics." Pollard concluded with a peroration that would appeal to Romualdi and the Americans, expressing the hope that all the workers would be brought into free trade unions "under a truly democratic and free government of the people, for the people, and by the people that shall not perish again."[26]

Why the Difference?

The defense of the GWU and British Honduran nationalism by Romualdi and Robert Alexander seems inexplicable. Just as in British Guiana, the British government and local establishment had blasted the opposition party and union as Communists, yet Romualdi and Alexander both concluded that in British Honduras, they were not, despite the acute danger that the PUP and GWU could lead independent Belize into the warm *abrazo* of Guatemala's Jacobo Árbenz. Why did Romualdi and Alexander not join the British in Red-baiting, as historian Stephen Rabe charged they had done in British Guiana? Why did they not lump together the British Honduran General Workers' Union with the Guiana Industrial

Workers' Union and the People's United Party with the People's Progressive Party? The answer is that Rabe did not take seriously the evidence that convinced Romualdi and Alexander.

In an article written weeks after Jagan's removal from power, Romualdi enumerated the reasons why the AFL had supported the British action: The Jagans and other People's Progressive Party leaders had visited the Eastern Bloc and returned with fulsome praise; the PPP set up numerous affiliates of Soviet Front Groups and based their women's and young people's organizations on Soviet models (going so far as to name the PPP's youth group the Young Pioneers, just as the Soviets had done); the PPP lifted British bans on the entry of West Indian Communists and the importation of Communist literature, which subsequently flooded the colony; PPP leaders carried portraits of Soviet premier Georgi Malenkov and Mao Zedong in the 1953 May Day Parade; the PPP government planned to cut educational ties between the government and church-run education; and most important to the AFL, the Guiana Industrial Workers' Union had joined the Soviet-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions and government ministers used their power to support a GIWU general strike launched to take control of the sugar workers and, with them, the entire trade union movement.[27] For Romualdi and the AFL, these actions combined to make a powerful case that Jagan and the PPP were Communists who were using their power to destroy free labor in British Guiana just as Communists had destroyed free labor behind the Iron Curtain.

Was Romualdi's case for Guianese communism proof that Jagan's government and his GIWU would drive British Guiana into the Communist camp? Most historians say no, but for the British it was—particularly when they combined it with secret evidence released in 2009 by MI5. These documents show that Cheddi Jagan had first made contact with the Soviets in Washington, DC in 1947 and, thereafter, he and Janet Jagan visited British Communist Party headquarters whenever they were in London, with Janet having made the most recent visit shortly after their election in April 1953.[28] Was this enough evidence to warrant removal of Jagan's government? Again, most historians would probably say no, but the British concluded it was and did. The intervention by Churchill's Conservative government was ultimately supported by the leaders of the opposition Labor Party, the TUC, and the ICFTU. And, of course, even without having the evidence from MI5, the fiercely anti-Communist AFL applauded Churchill's tough stand.

By contrast, in British Honduras, the People's United Party and General Workers' Union leaders did not praise the Soviets and their allies, let alone march under their portraits; did not set up local branches of Communist organizations or fronts; did not seek visits by West Indian Communists; did not import Communist writings; were devout Roman Catholics who did not try to separate church from state education; and, most important, the GWU did not join the World Federation of Trade Unions; instead, it participated in the founding of the AFL-supported ORIT, and Pollard served as an ICFTU delegate in Brussels for three months.

Romualdi and Alexander did agree with the British that the leaders of the GWU and the PUP had been intemperate—which was what had led the British to accuse them of sedition—and Romualdi privately chastised the GWU leaders for it. But Alexander argued that it was "a 'sedition' borne out of nationalist, anti-colonial

aspirations . . . and not the result of Communist infiltration or domination." The AFL could live with this kind of sedition—unhappily, because Romualdi and Alexander considered it childish and harmful to unionized workers—but they could live with it only as long as it came from free trade union leaders.[29]

Contrary to the meme that is the stereotype of American Federation of Labor Cold War foreign policy, anti-Communist hysteria did not necessarily stampede the AFL into opposition to anticolonial movements. As shown in British Guiana and British Honduras, AFL Latin America specialists investigated imperialist cries that Communists dominated anticolonial labor and political movements. They looked for evidence that verified the charge or exculpated the charged. And they concluded that while the Guianese were Communists or Communist-dominated and had to be stopped, the Hondurans were neither Communist nor Communist-duped and deserved the support of US labor even though they had antagonized the AFL's British allies.

The leaders of the AFL were able to draw distinctions between Communists and anticolonial nationalists in the British Caribbean. They fought the former while supporting and seeking to guide the latter. They were more subtle than we knew.

Notes

1. Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998); Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone: Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spymaster* (New York: Random House, 1999). The author would like to thank Ohio Northern University for providing funding that helped pay for research on this chapter, Geert van Goethem and Amsab for hosting the conference that made this book possible, and Dr. Patricia Sione of Cornell University' Kheel Center for her kindness in facilitating research.
2. I am using British Guiana instead of Guyana and British Honduras instead of Belize because these were the names used during the 1950s.
3. Stephen Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
4. On Cheddi Jagan, see in particular Clem Seecharan, *Sweetening "Bitter Sugar": Jock Campbell, The Booker Reformer in British Guiana, 1934–66* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2005); Colin A. Palmer, *Cheddi Jagan and the Politics of Power: British Guiana's Struggle for Independence* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Cheddi Jagan, *The West on Trial* (St. John's, Antigua: Hansib, 1997 ed., 1966).
5. See Robert Anthony Waters Jr. and Gordon O. Daniels, "The World's Longest General Strike: The AFL-CIO, the CIA, and British Guiana," *Diplomatic History* 29 (2005); Waters and Daniels, "Striking for Freedom? Cheddi Jagan and the Guianese Sugar Workers' Strike of 1964," *Cold War History* 10 (2010); and Waters and Daniels, "'When You're Handed Money on a Platter, It's Very Hard to Say, "Where Are You Getting This?"': The AFL-CIO, the CIA, and British Guiana," *Revue Belge de Philologie et D'Histoire* (Belgium) 84 (2006).
6. Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons: Recollections of a Labor Ambassador in Latin America* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967).
7. Rabe, 37.
8. Waters' telephone interview with Robert Alexander, December 4, 2009.
9. Rabe, 37–38.

10. Ibid., 38.
11. Romualdi to Lovestone, June 17, 1953, file 22, box 707 "Serafino Romualdi," Jay Lovestone Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA (henceforth, JLP, Hoover).
12. Gordon K. Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968), 289–309.
13. In this vast literature, see in particular, Nicholas Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's classified account of its operations in Guatemala, 1952–1954* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999); Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944–1954* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Richard Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1982).
14. O. Nigel Bolland, *Struggles for Freedom: Essays on Slavery, Colonialism, and Culture in the Caribbean and Central America* (Belize City: Angelus Press, 1997), 275–277; Robert J. Alexander with Eldon M. Parker, *A History of Organized Labor in the English-Speaking West Indies* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 79–82.
15. Governor of British Honduras to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Monthly Political Report: September, 1951," October 7, 1951, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," National Archives (United Kingdom) (henceforth, NAUK); *Weekly Contributions: Latin American Division*, ORE, CIA, February 28, 1950; Assad Shoman, *Belize's Independence and Decolonization in Latin America: Guatemala, Britain, and the UN* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 48, 49–50, 57.
16. H. A. Middleton to E. D. Hone (Colonial Secretary, British Honduras), March 3, 1950, 972.28/1, "British Honduras, 1939–1952" (henceforth, 972.28/1), Trades Union Congress Papers, University of Warwick, Warwick, England (henceforth, TUC Papers); General Secretary (Sir Vincent Tewson) to H. A. Middleton, April 26, 1950, 972.28/1, TUC Papers.
17. Governor of British Honduras to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Monthly Political Report: September, 1951," October 7, 1951, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK. Governor of British Honduras to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Monthly Political Report: October, 1951," November 10, 1951, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK.
18. Governor of British Honduras to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Monthly Political Report: September, 1951," October 7, 1951, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK; Shoman, 57–58.
19. Ibid.; Governor of British Honduras to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Monthly Political Report: November, 1951," December 10, 1951, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK.
20. "Assistant Secretary Romualdi Visits British Honduras," n.a., n.d. 1952, 2, file 9, box 2, Serafino Romualdi Papers, Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, M.P. Catherwood Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (henceforth, SRP, Kheel).
21. Romualdi to Lovestone, October 30, 1951, file 4, box 19, SRP, Kheel; "Assistant Secretary Romualdi Visits British Honduras," n.a., n.d., 1952, 2, file 9, box 2, SRP, Kheel.
22. "Assistant Secretary Romualdi Visits British Honduras and Jamaica," n.d. (April/May 1953), file 9, box 2, SRP, Kheel; P. M. Renison to Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Political Report for April, 1953," May 5, 1953, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK.
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24. P. M. Renison to Secretary of State for the Colonies, "Political Report for May, 1953," June 11, 1953, "Political Report for June, 1953," July 6, 1953, "Political Report for July, 1953," August 8, 1953, "Political Report for September, 1953," October 6, 1953, CO 1031/136, "Monthly Political Reports for British Honduras," NAUK; "Price Tells PUP Unite, Reject Foreign Lies: Christian leaders prevent Communism in B.H.," n.d., *Belize Billboard*, "PUP Offers $100 To Anybody Proving Party is 'Subversive,'" *Belize Billboard*, October 1, 1953, "Romualdi Repudiates Government's Charges," *Belize Billboard*, September 16, 1953, Nicholas Pollard, "The Truth About the GWU-PUP Alliance," September 30, 1953, Colonial Section (TUC) to N.A. Pollard, November 18, 1953, 972.28/2, "British Honduras, 1953–1960," TUC Papers.
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28. Christopher Andrew, *Defend the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009), 459–460.
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Chapter Ten

"Democracy and Freedom" in Brazilian Trade Unionism during the Civil-Military Dictatorship: The Activities of the American Institute for Free Labor Development

*Larissa Rosa Corrêa**

At the beginning of the 1960s, new developments arising from the Cold War led American authorities to change their policy for the so-called developing countries, especially in Latin America. Perturbed by the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and preoccupied by containing the advance of communism in the region, the government of John F. Kennedy initiated a program of international aid aimed at social and economic assistance for allied countries.

In this political context, President John Kennedy announced the Alliance for Progress shortly before he launched the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Inspired by previous development projects implanted soon after World War II, Kennedy created a 10-year plan for aid and cooperation with the objective of fomenting the economic, social, and political development of Latin America as well as guaranteeing the welfare of the United States.[1] In the same year, the US government founded the Peace Corps in Brazil (1961–1981), a developmental assistance program staffed by young American volunteers from around the country.[2] The objective was to promote progress in Brazil along the lines advanced by the Alliance for Progress.

In general, the idea was to direct neighboring countries to the path of "prosperity, freedom and self-confidence," principles that were considered fundamental for the creation of a common Western Hemisphere in which the values of "freedom" and "dignity" could be shared, thus also ensuring, at the same time, the continued economic development of advanced capitalist nations. Lincoln Gordon, US ambassador to Brazil from 1961 to 1966 and spokesperson for the Alliance for Progress, did not hide the economic benefits that could be gained by cooperation among governments in the Americas, arguing that "we know that prosperous neighbors can become good commercial partners."[3]

Even though the program of American financial aid in Brazil was mostly oriented toward the Northeastern region of the country, the Alliance for Progress also foresaw investments in Brazil as a whole in structural reforms centered on economic-industrial development, basic education, agrarian reform, improvements in housing and health, stabilization of inflation, and cooperative programs. In the labor relations field, the "education" project in the Brazilian trade union movement would be coordinated by the main American trade union federation, the AFL-CIO.

As such, the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) was founded in the same year as the launch of the Alliance for Progress.[4] Funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the entity focused on promoting the welfare of the working class through the reformulation of the Brazilian labor relations system, substituting the corporatist for a contractualist model. To accomplish this, the AIFLD invested in its own education program, aiming to form a new union leadership.[5]

To avoid criticism regarding US interference in national questions, the AIFLD founded the *Instituto Cultural do Trabalho* (ICT) with headquarters in São Paulo. Its objective was to provide financial subsidies and methodological support for the "reform" movement in Brazilian unionism.[6] Besides this association, International Trade Secretariats (ITSs) such as the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers (IFPCW) also established branches in Brazil after the 1964 military coup.

The AIFLD's program in Brazil was divided into urban and rural sectors. In the early years, the AIFLD emphasized the importance of helping to provide low-cost housing options for workers. For example, in 1964, the AIFLD intended to build 11,300 housing units in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Salvador, and Porto Alegre. According to Beth Sims, the social welfare projects initiated in urban areas were designed to present a positive image of the United States to Brazilians, depicting the AIFLD as an ally of Brazilian unions and thus contributing to the affiliation of new members.[7] In contrast to the urban labor strategies, the AFL-CIO saw rural sectors as ideal for the introduction of "free trade unionism" on account of the large number of unorganized laborers in areas ripe for economic development.[8] Additionally, such organizations hoped that with the introduction and implementation of a business-oriented labor model, they would be able to hold-off the spread of radical agrarian reform movements such as the "*Ligas Camponesas*" (Peasant Leagues), active in Brazil in this period.[9] Consequently, in such rural areas, the objective was to construct "service centers" for workers in the northeastern states of Pernambuco, Bahia, and Ceará. Similar projects were also developed in El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Mauritania.

However, the Alliance for Progress' proposals did not specify the possible strategies of action and the limits of interference in the specific problems of each nation. Anticipating possible criticisms from nationalist groups and Left movements, Ambassador Gordon carefully affirmed that there was no intention to eliminate the independent traditions and activities of Latin American countries in favor of the "American way of life," but rather to guarantee the functioning of

democratic institutions, stating, "It is our common purpose to demonstrate that free institutions may attend and will attend the material necessities of men working together through methods and leaders of their own choosing."[10]

According to Gordon, the Alliance for Progress had been established on the principle that only democratic institutions could satisfy the aspirations of free men, including work, home and property, health, and education. For the formulators of American policy, "freedom" could only be secured in a "democratic" political regime. Yet, despite the rhetoric of respect for the customs and specific questions of each country, the thin line between American "cooperation" and "intervention" in Brazil's politics and economy would be questioned in various settings and historical conjunctures in the 1960s and 1970s, as I intend to show throughout this chapter.

Despite almost two decades of activity in Brazil (1961–1978), the AIFLD and the forms through which American trade union interventions influenced union practices in Brazil after the 1964 coup have been little studied by Brazilian historians.[11] The greatest part of Brazilian research has been dedicated to the great working-class mobilizations at the end of the 1970s in which a "New Unionism" emerged in the dying years of the military dictatorship. Moreover, the repressive and controlling character of the military regime, which practically transformed unions into extensions of the Brazilian state, inclined historians to believe that there was little of interest to be studied in the period apart from a few courageous acts of pointed resistance by the working class.

Accordingly, I question why the military regime, even during the high point of its alliance with the US state, decided not to adopt the American contractualist labor relations system. To this end, I will analyze relations between Brazilian and American trade unions through the educational activities organized by the AFL-CIO and the State Department. Nevertheless, in observing the projects of the Alliance for Progress related to Brazilian unionism, I emphasize the complexity of transnational relations during the Cold War, focusing on the actions of the Brazilian government, which I consider to have been fundamental in the implementation of American trade union programs in the country.

One of the possible reasons for the lack of research on the AIFLD/AFL-CIO in Brazil is that such organizations were viewed by Left-wing groups in the country as instruments of American "imperialism." Since the 1970s, researchers such as Hobart Spalding and Beth Sims have revealed the strict relations between the AFL-CIO and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), demonstrating the close involvement of trade union leaders with members of the agency.[12] Yet it is evident that a good part of this bibliography, including the recent study by Kim Scipes,[13] has privileged general accusations rather than detailed study. It is important to emphasize that many of these studies were published during the dictatorships in Latin America and, therefore, are heavily marked by the repressive and antidemocratic actions of these states.

With or without proof, the fact is that for many nationalists and Left-wing activists in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, American unionism was viewed as an extension of the interests of the government and the CIA. To gain an idea, a common joke among Left-wing groups in Brazil was to call the AFL-CIO the

"AFL-CIA" in order to emphasize the ties between the two institutions. James Green observes that academics, members of the Peace Corps, and representatives of religious organizations, among other Americans, were suspected to be secret agents of the CIA.[14] Anti-American sentiment was a characteristic widely shared among the leftist movements since the end of the Second World War. Therefore, the question is posed: Were American unionists mere observers of the political situation in the Brazilian trade union movement or were they in the service of spy agencies?

US International Policy and Brazilian Labor

For those who conceived and created American international labor policy, the corporatist system of labor regulation identified with the Brazilian dictator Getúlio Vargas during the regime of the "New State" (1937–1945) represented a great obstacle to "free and democratic" trade unionism in the country. In their view, union leaders should have been responsible solely for the specific problems of workers, such as wage increases and better working conditions, demands that could be won through collective negotiations with the employer. According to the American contractualist system, Brazilian unionism should have developed independently of state control without the intervention of Labor Courts handcuffed by corporatist legislation. As Cliff Welch aptly observed: "For many American liberals, the corporatist labor relations system was a nightmare."[15]

In Brazil, the Ministry of Labor is responsible for the structural organization of workers' organizations, officially recognizing and authorizing unions. The activities of union leaders and the arbitration of conflicts between employers and workers are strictly adjudicated by the Labor Courts. Union structure is organized vertically in three levels: local, estate, and national. Unions are organized through specific categories of workers according to geographic divisions. Until the 1980s, union federations that united different categories of workers, such as the *Confederación General del Trabajo* (CGT) in Argentina or the AFL-CIO, were not permitted.[16]

Since the elected Dutra government (1946–1951), American unionists from the AFL, in conjunction with the US government, showed interest in reforming labor relations in Brazil. Until the beginning of the 1960s, however, the relationship between unionists in the two countries generally consisted of sporadic visits by American union leaders and authorities and specialists in labor relations, exchange programs, and activities organized by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the *Organização Regional Interamericana do Trabalho* (ORIT) in Rio de Janeiro.[17]

As Cliff Welch has demonstrated in an article about US. involvement in Brazilian trade unionism from 1945 to 1965, the US government was most preoccupied with Brazilian unionism at the beginning of the Cold War, a period in which strike levels in the country were high and the Brazilian Communist Party (PCB) was influential.[18] As a result, it was deemed necessary to export the "values" as well as the "institutional style" of American unions to the countries of Latin America, "teaching them how to manage labor relations with the objective

of maintaining production, promoting stability and shunning Communist agitators." The intention was to implement an idealized version of the American union movement through the creation of a national labor federation along the lines of the AFL, supported and sponsored by the international labor organizations.

Serafino Romualdi, the AFL representative in Latin America and a fervent anti-Communist, was one of the first leaders to make contact with unionists in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. His chief preoccupation was that Brazilian workers were susceptible to Communist ideology. In his first writings about the political situation in Brazil, he asserted: "If the non-communist leaders do not change their politics and their methods, the Communists could win the battle for control of Brazilian unionism." Romualdi disapproved of the actions of groups of unionists known in Brazil as "*pelegos*" (conservatives who acted under the inspiration of the Labor Ministry or laborite politicians) a term highly associated with the corporatist labor relations system. For him, Brazilian unionists were incredibly dependent on the federal government and had much to learn about collective bargaining methods. During the government of Juscelino Kubitschek (1956–1961), Romualdi dedicated himself to studying political events in Latin America and making contacts with influential people in order to cement alliances with union leaders and others who would approve the implementation of the American model in Brazil.

Romualdi maintained relations with the intelligence sector of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), during the war, and afterward with the CIA as well as counting on the support of the State Department. During one of his visits to consolidate his relationship with the Latin American union movement, he criticized the policy of Brazilian governments, affirming that, "The corporatist system, which controls the unions, was the chief provoking factor in the political chaos and economic disaster that has beset the country."[19]

Robert J. Alexander, an anti-Communist Social Democrat and a specialist in Latin American unionism, was also concerned with the controlling role that the state exercised over the Brazilian trade union movement. In one of his reports to the AFL-CIO, he explained how the corporatist system of Brazilian labor relations functioned:

> the government still exercises strict control over the finances of the Brazilian unions, forcing them to submit each June a budget for the next year, which cannot go into execution until approved by the Ministry of Labor. There is also government control over union elections, though this situation has changed in recent months. The government still has the final say on union elections, which, incidentally, must be held as prescribed by law. There is still relatively little collective bargaining as we know it.[20]

In the period in which Romualdi and Alexander visited, the Brazilian trade union movement experienced various changes. During the democratic period from 1945 to 1964, Brazilian workers organized combative unions in the automobile, textile, railway, and chemical industries. In the 1940s, the PCB increased its influence in the unions, in part as a result of its important electoral victories

in the large industrial centers such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Many sectors of the union movement began to negotiate directly with employers, bypassing and ignoring corporatist institutions. Despite being officially illegal in the 1950s and 1960s, the PCB played an influential role in the union movement.[21]

In addition to changes in the Brazilian labor relations system, the US government in cooperation with the American unions also considered it paramount to promote the depoliticization of the union movement. At the beginning of the 1960s, the country lived through a period of the growth and mobilization of the working-class movement. The first years of the Alliance for Progress were characterized by timid and problematic actions due to the unstable relationship between the governments of the United States and Brazil.[22] The distance between the two countries resulted, above all, from a foreign policy oriented to economic independence charted by the governments of Jânio Quadros (1961) and João Goulart (1961–1964). The period also witnessed the growth of anti-American sentiment among the popular movements led by nationalists and the Left who did not hide their criticisms of the Alliance for Progress.

The years that preceded the civil-military coup of 1964 were highlighted by strike waves and a serious political and economic crisis intensified by ideological polarization. During the presidency of João Goulart, the organized working-class movement along with nationalist groups and the Left played a fundamental role in the struggle for the government's "Reforms from Below."[23] Many of the Goulart government's reforms were harshly criticized by sectors of the middle and upper classes who feared a "Cubanization" of the country and referred to the government as a "Trade Union Republic." By the end of 1963, Goulart was suffering extreme pressure as much from Left groups and nationalists to implement reforms as from conservative sectors and the military who fiercely opposed them.

It was in this climate of political instability and the fear that Communists or nationalists would assume power that Ambassador Gordon convinced Kennedy of the necessity of a coup d'état orchestrated by the Brazilian military. In 1963, the AIFLD sent a group of American unionists considered "democratic leaders" to Brazil to participate in a unionism course offered by the AFL-CIO. In a radio interview a few months after the civil-military coup, William Doherty, the International Affairs representative for the AFL-CIO, declared:

> As a matter of fact, some of them [Brazilian labor leaders] were so active that they became intimately involved in some of clandestine operations of the revolution before it took place on April 1. What happened in Brazil on April 1 did not just happen – it was planned – and planed months in advance. Many of the trade union leaders – some of whom were actually trained in our institute – were involved in the revolution, and in the overthrow of the Goulart regime.[24]

Searafino Romualdi later confirmed that the AIFLD had trained "a special group of 39 Brazilian participants" on the eve of the coup. It is possible that Doherty had overestimated the action of these unionists in the movement that the Americans recognized as a "Revolution." The fact is that we know very little about their activities in the installation of the military regime in 1964. Although

the participation of the US government in the overthrow of João Goulart is well known, the names of these unionists were never completely revealed nor do we know to which unions they belonged, their involvement with US union organizations, and, principally, in what form they contributed to the coup.[25] In any case, we know that many unions and their leaderships, as with the police, military groups, political parties, students, and housewives, formed movements important in Goulart's downfall.[26]

"What's Good for the United States Is Good for Brazil": The Activities of the AIFLD in Brazil (1964–1966)[27]

One of the first actions of the military regime was the political demobilization of the urban and rural working class with the aim of minimizing class conflict. Hundreds of union activists and leaders were removed from their unions and many were persecuted and imprisoned, initiating the rigid control of the Brazilian union movement during the dictatorship. Finally, the ground was clear for American unions to develop a series of educational activities and aid programs in the urban and rural zones intended to establish "free unionism" in the country. For the State Department and the leaders of the AFL-CIO, the time had arrived to make concrete the project of creating new leaders and preparing them for the practice of "independent" and "democratic" collective bargaining. According to an annual report on Brazil produced by the AFL-CIO/AIFLD in 1964:

> In recent years the Western world has become agonized over the dangerous situation in northeast Brazil, has looked on with concern at the increase of Communist influence under President Goulart, and has breathed sighs of relief as more responsible elements ousted Goulart in the April revolution. Now the opportunity exists for the West to take concrete measures to show the peasants and workers of Brazil that their needs are the concern of the developed nations, and that democratic processes can fill those needs. The program of the AIFLD is designed to play a key role in this great economic and political endeavor. If it succeeds, the free labor movement which will result will provide a strong force impelling Brazil along the road to stable, pluralistic democracy. The staff of the Social Projects Department will make every effort to see that this program does in fact succeed.[28]

The "clean-up operation" promoted by the generals in the government dealt with eliminating the Communist presence in the country, thus paving the way to receive international aid from the United States. From 1964 to 1966, the AIFLD supported a series of events and union conferences in Brazil to debate "free and democratic" unionism. It was viewed as a moment for the gathering of information, the identification of problems, and evaluations of the projects that could be implanted in the country. According to the AIFLD, the lack of a skilled workforce in Brazil appeared as one of the chief problems. Other studies, dealing with the characteristics of each union confederation and federation, were intended to ensure that Left-wing organizations, including imprisoned, exiled, and fugitive Communists, would no longer represent a threat to the new government.

In the diplomatic field, the Brazilian government strongly indicated its desire to cooperate with the interests of the United States and reintegrate the country "in the bosom of the Western community." For Juracy Magalhães, the Brazilian ambassador to the United States, it was time to undo the past misunderstandings that had hampered amicable relations between the two countries. As such, he invited representatives of the private sector in the United States to learn about the new Brazilian reality and consider the possibilities of intensifying foreign participation in the Brazilian economy.[29]

However, labor education was not enough for the AFL-CIO. Its leaders and AIFLD officials saw the new military regime as an opportunity to transform the Brazilian labor system as a whole. Additionally, the US labor coalition called for the end to the military regime and for the return of a democratically elected representative government. The US government (as well as American labor leaders) believed that the military regime would be short-lived and, ultimately, "preventive" in that it would remove populists and Communists from the political arena. Power would then return to a civilian democracy. For many US government officials, President General Castelo Branco's decision to remain in office was seen as a grave disappointment. During the AFL-CIO's Sixth Constitutional Convention held on May 19, 1965, the Executive Council stressed the importance of making changes in the Brazilian military government, in order to promote democracy in the country:

> The rights of the working people must be unequivocally recognized in Brazil. Organized labor must have the right to participate fully in the nation's program for social and economic development. This has not been achieved and all democracy has suffered. Moreover, the Castelo Branco administration has recently become an authoritarian regime. It has curtailed civic and political rights and liberties and the Brazilian labor movement has again been forced back to its original status—an integral part of the State. The free trade unions can never accept and submit to the suspension, let alone the destruction of democracy as a solution for the ills of economy—even if they were to receive economic concessions in return for such submission. Without democracy, the free trade unions cannot exist. Similarly, no society can long maintain the democratic way of life, if it curtails the freedoms and independence of the trade union movement. Even a coalition of honest technocrats with well-meaning military leaders can never serve as a substitute for democracy and its vital institutions, such as free trade unions.[30]

The principal issue for US officials and the AFL-CIO was how to establish free and democratic trade unionism in Brazil *without* the support of the military regime and their union allies. However, they soon hit a dead end. The American labor leaders came to believe that they had to depend on the military and "pelegos" union leaders, otherwise the "Communists" would be back again. Yet AIFLD officials were optimistic about the future. They believed they could educate a new youth generation of "democratic and free" union leadership. In 1964 and 1965, with the support of President General Castelo Branco, the representatives of the AIFLD were both excited and hopeful with respect to their efforts in Brazil. However, despite their optimism, US officials still had to come to terms with the authoritarian nature of the government.

The new program of Brazilian economic stabilization, whose basic principles included wage freezes, brought a series of changes that directly affected labor relations. Many of them profoundly concerned American authorities who saw in the new measures the impossibility of developing a restructuring of Brazilian unionism.[31] The right to strike and collective negotiations independent of the state constituted pillars of the US contractualist model. The impossibility of putting these in practice in Brazil presented great difficulties for the implanting of "free and democratic unionism." As a result, even though the external policy of the Castelo Branco government was in line with American ideals, there was still the question of dealing with a series of conflicting political and economic interests, highlighting quite different methods and ideas between the two countries.

This begs the question, why would the Castelo Branco government want to promote changes in the corporatist system if the working class was effectively under the control of the government? Most importantly, the majority of those conservative union leaders who supported the regime had little interest in promoting collective negotiations and even less interest in risking their own leadership positions, even though they considered it advantageous to ally with the American union movement in order to promote their own personal interests and get rid of their main adversaries in the labor movement: the nationalists and the Communists.

An interview with a former official of the Rio de Janeiro Commerce Workers' Union illustrates several aspects of the relationship between Brazilian union leaders and US institutions such as the AFL-CIO. Luis Carlos Vasco graduated from the AIFLD labor leadership course in 1976. When asked how he came to take part in this course, he answered: "They invited me to do it and I did it! We thought that this kind of course was very modern, since it came from the United States. It was a good political network, if you took part in these courses you would have all the support of the U.S. Embassy, I myself even went there frequently."[32]

The *Instituto Cultural do Trabalho* in São Paulo

The ICT, represented by Gilbert Richmond, intended to promote conferences, courses, seminars, and studies on unionism as well as other activities such as providing scholarships, signing agreements with similar institutions in Brazil or abroad, and promoting technical and economic educational exchanges between the United States and Brazil. The ICT tried not to expose the direct relationship of the Institute with the AIFLD. The ICT was maintained by contributions from the private sector. Its publications stressed the democratic character of its activities, as well as the importance of promoting authentic leaders who were committed to democratic values. It also criticized the performance of "*pelegos*" union leaders yet, throughout its existence, it was inevitable that they would have to deal with such leaders to develop their activities due to the difficulties encountered in forming "new leaderships" capable of planting the seed of business unionism.

In the first half of 1964, just after the military coup, the ICT promoted a one-week course for Brazilian unionists in 12 states and 18 cities. In the same year, the third class of São Paulo unionists graduated from the ICT labor leadership course.

At this time, the ICT had support from the ORIT and the ITSs. From these courses, the ICT selected the best 35 participants to take part in intensive training for three months in São Paulo. By the end of 1964, more than 100 trade union leaders had graduated from the ICT/AIFLD leadership training courses. Gilbert Richmond was quite optimistic and predicted that in two years, 80 percent of union leaders would be prepared to enact "free trade unionism" in Brazil.[33]

Moreover, 876 union leaders attended the regional seminars, another 100 individuals from 34 different urban areas attended the 3-month intensive course in São Paulo, and an additional 12 unionists were sent to Washington, DC to take part in a specialized AIFLD course. The ICT also offered a union leadership course in Santos, two more courses for 108 metalworkers in São Paulo, as well as several other seminars in rural locations, which were viewed as strategic due to the danger of Communist influence. Based on these optimistic reports and after the Brazilian government supported the US occupation of the Dominican Republic, the USAID decided to increase its financial support to the AIFLD program in Brazil.

However, the AIFLD faced many problems in its attempts to transform the labor movement in a timely fashion. With more than 21,000 union officials spread out in more than 4,000 unions, the biggest concern for the AIFLD was how to foster a new US-trained leadership that could take power in the absence of the purged leftist and nationalist union leaders. The AIFLD also planned to influence the Brazilian generals and Congress to approve a bill that could regulate collective bargaining without the interference of the Labor Courts.[34]

The ITSs also increased their activities in São Paulo largely through the International Union of Food and Allied Workers, which until 1964 did not have Brazilian members. The Oil and Chemical Workers also arranged with São Paulo labor leaders to expand their educational programs in Brazil. By the same token, the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, and Technical Employees launched a range of activities in 1964, which included the broadcast of a weekly radio program dedicated to proclaiming the merits of "democratic" unionism. In the same year, the AIFLD and IFOCW organized a series of seminars to discuss methods of free collective bargaining. These meetings included simulations where participants would publicly perform how to properly engage in collective bargaining between employers and employees.

The surge in the AIFLD's activities in the period following the military coup resulted in a number of public critiques of the US labor program. Language was one of the main problems for the Brazilian workers in the ICT international courses, which were taught mainly in English. And each local seminar cost almost US $2,000, a figure considered high by the American Embassy in Brazil. Additionally, Brazilian union leaders complained that they were not represented in the ICT Executive Council. They also argued that the ICT's courses were too academic and criticized the lack of rank-and-file support for the programs. In response, AIFLD officials were disappointed with the "lack of self-sacrifice" on the part of workers who had taken part in the training courses. The Americans considered this to be a clear sign that Brazilian workers had "little interest." Certainly, US and Brazilian trade unionists had different expectations from the training courses.[35]

Another issue that the ICT officials raised was the heterogeneity of the Brazilian labor students. This was a complicated pedagogical issue for the ICT, as it had to unite in the same classroom, for example, bank workers (who normally had completed a secondary education) with semiliterate rural workers.[36] In relation to the selection of students, another challenge was to avoid the union leadership choosing candidates on the basis of personal preference or for their own benefit. In international courses, moreover, it was common to have students abandon their union activities when they returned to Brazil. Many did not develop the active role in the labor movement that the AIFLD expected. To solve this matter, the ICT/AIFLD determined that after taking part in an international labor course, the participants would be required to work in the union movement for at least six-to-twelve months before they would receive their official diploma. Finally, the Americans had to deal with the growing perception among Brazilian unionists that the AIFLD was only intended to further the interests of the US government, the CIA, and multinational corporations.

The Question of Collective Bargaining During the Military Dictatorship

It is important to highlight several features of the Brazilian dictatorship to understand the AIFLD's activities. The authoritarian regime sought to maintain a façade of democracy and was very concerned about its legal institutionalization. The idea that the "Revolution" (as the coup was called by the military and their conservative supporters) saved "democracy" from the Communists was a central component of the military's official rhetoric. American support helped to consolidate this image. In spite of the purging of many trade unionists and politicians from 1964 to 1968, elected deputies could still vote on laws, participate in legislative meetings, and run in elections. Yet, at the same time, the executive power had control over the legislature, passing a series of "Institutional Acts" and constitutional amendments to "legalize" arbitrary rule within a formal legal structure. An example of this is the military's treatment of political prisoners. While the organs of repression tortured and assassinated opponents of the regime, the government also conducted official police inquiries and convoked a Military Tribunal to judge political prisoners in an attempt to cover up their repressive activities.[37]

In the first years of the new regime, the generals tried to combat an unstable economic situation by adopting regressive wage policies and tight controls on labor. These actions caused a great deal of discontent among the labor movement as well as other sectors of civil society. Indeed, according to Minister of Finance Octavio Gouvea Bulhões and the minister of planning Roberto Campos, Brazil's inflation was caused primarily by public sector deficits, excessive credit to the private sector, and excessive wage increases.[38]

In 1965, the military initiated a wage-control program in order to reduce the inflationary process and accelerate economic development. With the implementation of Law 4725 on July 13, 1965, known as the "Law of Salary Compression," salary increases were defined only in accordance with the definition of the rate of

the cost of living, determined by the federal government and applied to all workers. Thus, the new wage policy prevented unions from making collective agreements with employers for higher levels of adjustment than those stipulated by the government. The generals believed that all collective agreements should be litigated in the Labor Courts, even if the agreements were made directly with employers. The Brazilian government also reduced the power of the Labor Courts in terms of how collective bargaining decisions were defined. In 1964, Law 4.330 established a clear bureaucratic process that unions would have to follow in order to call a legal strike, practically making all strikes illegal. As Margareth Keck has noted, "real wages declined; with the elimination both of the issue (wages) and the weapon (the strike) through which they had mobilized their members and exercised bargaining power, unions were severely weakened."[39]

During Castelo Branco's first years in office, the US Embassy criticized the excessive "legalism" of the Brazilian government, fearing that Communist leaders could return to the labor scene. As the Minister Consul General of São Paulo, Niles W. Bond, wrote:

> [A]s long as Communists are allowed to participate in the informal leadership of unions where they formerly had strongholds of support, the Federal Government is in for serious difficulties in the fall salary campaigns. Since the revolution, salary increases have been only slightly below levels before the revolution and these have been in most cases small, poorly organized categories. The excessive 'legalism' of the government and the traditional Brazilian respect for the freedoms of extremist political groups appeared to be defeating the aims of the revolution.[40]

US authorities believed that the Brazilian government should establish a labor policy that would benefit the interests of the working class and hoped to convince the Brazilians that their newly trained unionists would be ideal when compared with the Communist alternative.

In 1965 (the same year the "Law of the Salary Compression" was enacted), a bill on free collective bargaining was sent to Congress for approval, with the support of the AIFLD and other US international labor organizations. The US Embassy's labor attaché, Herbert Baker, stated that if the bill were passed, it "would represent a major step toward democratic unionism." But the bill did not pass Congress. The Brazilian government alleged incompatibility between its proposed economic program and the notion of independent collective bargaining. The refusal to establish independent collective bargaining represented a setback in diplomatic relations between Brazil and the United States that directly affected the AIFLD's activities. This was the beginning of a period of increased tension between the military regime and US efforts in the labor field that would ultimately lead to the end of the AIFLD's activities in Brazil a decade later. After the failure of the bill, the Brazilian military promised that they would resubmit it, but nothing was done in the following years to revive it.[41]

Transnational Experiences: The AIFLD's Union to Union Program

Since 1966, the AIFLD conducted educational programs at the Front Royal Institute in Virginia for selected Brazilian labor leaders. Students were taught

leadership skills, finance, the history of the international trade union movement, economics and statistics, English, and collective bargaining techniques. Loyola University in New Orleans and Georgetown University in Washington, DC also offered international courses for Brazilian unionists. According to the US ambassador to Brazil John W. Tuthill, "One of the best ways to help educate and enlighten the Brazilian people was to promote visits to the United States so they could meet a really civilized country."[42] By the same token, the US government financed trips to the United States for Brazilians whom the American Embassy considered socially influential.

The AIFLD's "Union to Union Program" was premised on the belief that the exchange of experiences was the best didactic method for union education. According to Ambassador Tuthill, it could be an effective way to strengthen the ties of solidarity and cooperation among Americans and Brazilians and, at the same time, it could "teach" foreign workers how collective bargaining functioned throughout the American labor relations system. After completing four years of the program in 1968, the AIFLD could boast that 39 delegations of the most important Brazilian unions had graduated from the program, while only 13 American union members went to Brazil.[43]

In November 1966, two American trade unionists who were participating in the AIFLD exchange program issued public statements criticizing the labor policy of the Brazilian military regime. These statements contributed to worsening the relationship between the two countries. The American unionists openly criticized the absence of collective bargaining in the country as well as the lack of housing for workers, among other observations. The Brazilian ambassador to the United States, Vasco Leitão da Cunha, answered the critics in a *New York Times* article. He explained the differences between the contractualist and the corporatist labor systems, recognizing the importance of collective bargaining, but stressing that it should be subjugated to a wage policy and the political economy as a whole. In Brazil, Minister of Labor Nascimento e Silva also rebutted the critics through the press. He did not deal with the question of foreign intervention in Brazilian problems, but emphasized the difficulties in comparing the two labor relations systems.

What Is Good for the United States Is Not Necessarily Good for Brazil

After the AIFLD's initial period of euphoria, it faced new difficulties and changes by 1967 when General Costa e Silva succeeded Castelo Branco as president of Brazil. During this time, relations between Brazil and the United States, instrumentalized largely through the actions of the Alliance for Progress, became tenser as both countries shifted course. The cooperation pact with the "brother from the North" constructed during the Castelo Branco regime was gradually substituted by a kind of military nationalism.

In general, the funds available in the Alliance for Progress were destined for social assistance, principally for the purchase of food and medicine as well as the construction of low-income housing for poor populations. For Costa e Silva, this was very little. His administration was more interested in loans that would increase economic growth and eventually leave Brazil economically independent from the

US government. This difference of interests provoked a gradual political distancing between the two nations, although American financial assistance was maintained throughout the period. The shift in diplomatic treatment could be explained in part by the increased American presence in Brazil, which provoked an increase in anti-American sentiment not only among the Left, but also increasingly among conservative sectors and the military.

In the labor field, the program of implementing a model of "free and democratic unionism" was unable to advance within the limits imposed by the international conjunction of the Cold War and national barriers put up by the political economy of the military regime. At the same time, the Alliance for Progress was no longer so important as it had been during the Kennedy presidency since Brazil no longer represented a direct threat to the security of the United States. The conception of the program since Kennedy's assassination was constantly reformulated and distanced from its original ideals. Additionally, in contrast to what occurred during the Goulart government, the working class no longer threatened the most conservative groups in the military and civil society since their actions were strongly controlled by the repressive apparatus of the state.

Accusations of Bribery and Corruption

From 1967 onward American union activities in Brazil retreated as denunciations of the torture of political prisoners, which reached the front pages of international newspapers, began to discomfort the US government. In the same year, a parliamentary inquiry was formed to investigate the accusation that the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers and other organizations financed by the United States were interfering in internal Brazilian union questions through the activities of the AFL-CIO and the CIA.[44] Lourival Coutinho, president of the Petroleum Workers' Union in Guanabara, accused the CIA of financing the IFPCW and the other ITS activities in Brazil. According to Coutinho, these organizations acted as puppets of American business interests in the country.

On December 21, 1967, the Rio de Janeiro edition of the newspaper, *Última Hora*, published a story denouncing corruption and bribery involving the IFPCW and Brazilian unions. According to the article, the Ministry of Labor and the Chamber of Deputies were investigating relations between Efrain Velasquez of the International Union of Petroleum Workers and Alcir Nogueira of the Chemical Workers' Union of Santo André. The IFPCW organized seminars and courses for workers, the newspaper charged, merely to influence Brazilian unionists and represent the interests of the big petroleum companies.[45]

The case returned to the newspapers in January and February 1968 with the declaration that the government would expel all international union bodies with the exception of the AIFLD since it was linked to the Alliance for Progress. Justice Minister Luís Antonio da Gama e Silva gave a deadline of 15 days for Herbert Kemmsies, the director of the International Union of Workers in Petrochemical Companies, to leave the country under the allegation that his visa was in an irregular situation. Whether or not Velasquez could stay was also investigated.[46]

Despite such official accusations of corruption, American Embassy analysts blamed Left-wing movements for the crisis in the relationship with international unionism. They said that one of those responsible for the wave of defamations was Danton Jobin, editor of the newspaper *Última Hora* and considered to be a Left-wing journalist. The other was Helder Camara, archbishop of the cities of Olinda and Recife, and representative of the Catholic Left, who along with Jobin had made systematic criticisms of the role played by international unions in Brazil. In a column titled "Corruption and unions" published on January 17, 1968, Jobin accused American unionists of teaching workers to become leaders without modifying the status quo. In announcing the closing of those international organizations accused of "financing" Brazilian unionism, Jobin claimed that this was not a case of xenophobia. To the contrary, "the union movement, in our opinion, should cross national frontiers when it is inspired by the ideal of fraternity between workers and aims for solutions to common problems in various countries." What cannot be accepted, Jobin asserted, "is that, under the pretext of legitimate internationalization, beachheads of foreign interests be installed in Brazil."[47]

Helder Camara, for his part, also incited opposition to American unionists in a speech to members of the Federation of Agricultural Workers of the Northeast. The archbishop alerted his audience to "distrust the easy money" offered by these organizations, alleging that "these investments" only contributed to the weakening of the union struggle. He thus advised them not to accept foreign money since the Americans "break our will, our desire to struggle." He concluded: "If the money had come from Russia, independently from who would receive it, we would instinctively begin to think in agreement with the Russian scheme. If the money came from the United States, we would also begin to think in agreement with the American model."[48]

In a response to Jobin's editorial, Efraim Velasquez, the IFPCW representative, wrote a letter refuting the accusations, alleging that the objective of these oppositionists was actually to eliminate the Alliance for Progress.[49] His response had no impact on the Brazilian press. On February 17, the Federal Police closed the offices of the IFPCW and the International Federation of Chemical and Diverse Workers. Velasquez, an American citizen, was imprisoned for 14 hours.

These events appeared to mobilize the American Embassy, which closely followed the actions of the government and the police. Yet authorities in the American international union movement did not appear to understand the shift in behavior by the Brazilian government. After all, in the recent past, these same leaders had defended the legitimacy of the civil-military coup in Brazil and had been treated as partners by the Brazilian union movement.[50] For the AFL-CIO's analysts, the conflict was the fruit of an alliance between the Brazilian state and a group of industrialists who believed that the IFPCW acted as an instrument of foreign petroleum companies against the interests of the Brazilian state petroleum company, Petrobrás.[51]

Each year it became more difficult for the AIFLD, which was also active in Argentina and Chile, to maintain its efforts in Brazil. However, it insisted on maintaining its presence, attempting to communicate with the government authorities and with the "*pelegos*" union leaders. At the end of the 1960s, the

American government was barraged with criticisms of its intervention in Brazil and its methods of combating communism in other Latin American countries. In the labor sector, the former director of the National Housing Bank (BNH), Sandra Cavalcanti, accused the AFL-CIO of ties with the CIA, a fact that she said she observed while coordinating a $23 million USAID housing project (in the end, the houses were never built).[52]

In 1969, soon after the establishment of the highly repressive AI-5 law by the Brazilian military regime,[53] the Nixon government sent governor of New York Nelson Rockefeller to Brazil. The objective of the mission was to observe the situation and, if possible, improve relations. After the disappointing visit, which had little economic or political impact, the Nixon government suspended the financial aid the United States had given to Brazil since 1961.[54] The advance of Brazilian military authoritarianism had begun to leave the American government in the uncomfortable position of being the chief supporter of dictatorial regimes in Latin American, exactly as its critics alleged.[55]

Between 1967 and 1969, the AIFLD found itself in a period of uncertainty, largely on account of the increasing discontent voiced by labor leaders and several important Brazilian government sectors over the prevalence of non-Brazilian institutions operating in national territory. To avoid the increasing anti-American sentiment and criticisms of American interference in national issues, the AIFLD decided to transfer the direction of the ICT in São Paulo to trustworthy Brazilian unionists. While the AIFLD continued to finance the ICT, this change made dialogue even more difficult between the two entities since the directors of the AIFLD would no longer dominate international union activities in the country.

During police investigation of international union organizations, the number of students enlisted in the leadership course offered by the ICT in April 1968 was low, with just 19 students. For American Embassy labor analysts, there was no doubt that the rejected invitations to enroll in the course were the result of the propaganda wave against international organizations. Indeed, the AIFLD/ICT had lost the support of the leadership of the Brazilian union confederations and federations.[56]

On August 25, 1968, the newspapers published the results of the investigation against American union organizations in Brazil.[57] In all, 83 depositions were collected under the coordination of Ildélio Martins, director of the National Department of Labor. The conclusion was that the trips made by Brazilian unionists and financed by international organizations were intended to "soften them in order to gain support" for international union projects. For the Commission, the foreigners had interfered with and seduced the leaders "in an attempt to provoke non-national tendencies in the country." According to Martins, the trips did not provide proof of corruption although they were still searching for evidence of possible illicit activities committed through the financing of courses offered by the ICT and the AIFLD. Moreover, the Commission related, the Brazilian students had been the object of disputes between different European and American union organizations. The latter groups were preoccupied in maintaining their hegemony in the labor movement, especially in Latin America, against the advance of the World Federation of Trade Unions, with its headquarters in Prague, Czechoslovakia,

tied to the Soviet Bloc. According to the report, the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers aimed to raise funds for the International Solidarity Fund, an organ of the ICFTU, which was coordinated by AFL-CIO president George Meany. Martins described the jurisdictional disputes among two or more federations to represent the petroleum and chemical sectors in Brazil as "union piracy."

During the Fourth National Congress of Industrial Workers in September 1970, "four million workers said to the gringos: go home!" wrote *The Chemical Worker* newspaper, which reported on the rupture of relations between the Brazilian and American union organizations. The initiative came from the National Confederation of Industrial Workers, which had maintained strong relations in the 1960s with American unions. According to the newspaper, foreign unionists, who participated in the conference as "observers," left the event visibly irritated. More than just irritated, they were surprised by the Brazilians' hostile behavior. The newspaper opined, "The international agents, used to giving us orders, thought they were in front of a Congress easily manipulated in the interests of the United States."

In the same period, the political police began to investigate the AFL-CIO's actions in Brazil. According to a police report, it appeared that "the AIFLD is a species of spearhead in the search for good business investments for the AFL-CIO and its close friends."[58] In 1972, the police investigated the activities of Louis Berger, a businessman from Orange, New Jersey, linked to AFL-CIO president George Meany. The police investigation found that Berger was the representative in various countries for the business interests of the AFL-CIO. His business had been expelled from Mexico, accused of involvement in corruption in the construction of popular housing. In São Paulo, there were suspicions that Berger was in league with the federal deputy and businessman Roberto Gebara, ex-secretary of labor of São Paulo state under the notoriously corrupt governor Adhemar de Barros.[59]

In May 1975, during a visit by Mike Boggs, the assistant director of the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, an official of the AIFLD witnessed an "interesting discussion" between Boggs and Brazilian Minister of Labor Arnaldo Prieto. According to the witness, "Prieto endorsed the AIFLD program, but also proclaimed that what is good for the U.S. is not necessarily good for Brazil and vice-versa."[60]

Despite all these difficulties, the ICT/AIFLD continued its activities even during the intensification of the repressive dictatorship under General Emilio Garrastazu Médici (1969–1974). At the beginning of the 1970s, a public housing project called Vila Gompers was inaugurated in São Bernardo de Campo, the most important city in São Paulo's industrial belt, the fruit of cooperation between Brazilian and American unions. In the same year, the first allegations of torture of Brazilian political prisoners were printed in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.[61] Even though President Médici promised to reestablish a "democratic order," his government increased repression against what the state termed "terrorist" sectors of the population. At the same time, the Brazilian economy was growing quickly (it was the period known as the "Brazilian economic miracle"),

thanks to massive public spending and huge investments by multinational corporations attracted by a general pro-business atmosphere, relatively low wages, and strict labor control.

In this complex political and economic context, the Inter-American affairs representative of the AFL-CIO, Andrew McLellan, demonstrated his uneasiness when he advised Alan Silberman, the labor officer of the American Embassy in Brazil, "The AIFLD aimed to maintain a neutral view of the Brazilian political situation, but we cannot ignore the facts on the reports [about torture], which we have had the privilege to read."[62]

Beyond "Free and Democratic Trade Unionism"

Even with the increased divergence and growing distance between Brazilian and American labor, the AFL-CIO maintained an office in Brazil until 1976.[63] We still do not know exactly why, beyond the establishment of US "business unionism" and the fight against communism, the AFL-CIO office remained in Brazil for so long. Pablo Pozzi, who analyzed the role of the AIFLD in Argentina based on American sources, argues that the main US interest in international labor organizations was the elimination of the Latin American workers' hostility toward US corporations.[64] Indeed, the AIFLD was formed by the alliance between employers, unions, and the US. government with the interests of American business well represented. In 1965, for instance, Charles Brinkerhoff (Anaconda Corporation), William Hinckley (United Corporation), Robert Hill (Merck and Company), Juan C. Trippe, (Pan American World Airways); Henry Woodbridge (Tru-Temper Copper Corporation), and J. Peter Grace (W. R. Grace Corporation) were all members of the AIFLD executive board. All of these corporations had clear economic interests in Latin America.

In the 1970s, the AIFLD realized that it was not possible to make any substantive changes in the corporatist labor system in Brazil. Even in these circumstances, it is reasonable to argue that the AFL-CIO considered that it would still be good for their interests to keep the AIFLD office open as a way to analyze economic and political developments in Brazil. The series of reports prepared by the AIFLD officials with the collaboration of the labor attachés must have been useful for US employers. For example, a report written in 1967 by businessman Berent Friele, who was also a member of the AIFLD board of directors, states:

> He [President Costa e Silva] has surrounded himself with a man of talent, integrity and experience in the economic field. It is therefore obvious that Costa e Silva is anxious to enlist the support and cooperation of private enterprise in carrying out his gigantic task of economic development. Foreign capital and know-how is welcome on terms which are more attractive than in most countries. However, it is important for foreign investors to realize that quick profits cannot be expected.[65]

In this article, I have argued that the successful performance of the AIFLD in Brazil did not depend only on US international policies, but also depended on the relationship with the Brazilian authorities and their national political and economic

interests. Even though relations were good between Brazil and the United States in the period following the 1964 coup, the Brazilian generals were not willing to "sell the farm," so to speak. On several occasions, the Brazilian government promised to consider the American trade unionists' requests; however, in the end, the generals did the exact opposite of what the Americans' labor leadership expected.

Curiously, after the closing of the AIFLD's activities in Brazil, Brazilian unions' demands for free collective bargaining, which the AIFLD had worked to achieve for so long, finally began to take form. The so-called New Unionism, – which emerged after the famous metalworkers' strikes in 1978–1979 – defied military rule in calling for a return to democracy, more autonomy for unions in relation to the state, and the elimination of the interference of the Labor Courts in the settlement of collective agreements. As Margareth Keck argued,

> For leaders who wanted unions to be more than administrators of social protection programs, the logical shift would eventually be to try to win concessions directly from employers. This change in strategy, however, did not begin to emerge until the second half of the 70s and, even then, union leaders were at first unable to obtain a response from employers. Collective bargaining implies that workers possess weapons of coercion with which to confront employers—specifically, the right to strike. Thus until this right began to be won de facto with the strikes in 1978, collective bargaining was more talked about than practiced.[66]

Nonetheless, we still do not know if the New Unionism leadership was actually influenced by the ideas of the American unions. Also, it would be important to analyze how collective bargaining was treated by the Labor Courts during the military regime and to what extent the law was effectively enforced. Alas, these issues are topics for a future article.

To conclude, it is important to observe the resistance on the part of American unions to accepting the corporatist regulation of Brazilian labor. Possibly, it was because they were conscious of the importance of labor legislation and its political and cultural significance for the working class. In general, American unionists tended to see Brazilian workers either as "puppets" of demagogic and paternalist politicians, such as Getúlio Vargas and João Goulart, or as docile figures incapable of rebelling against military authoritarianism.[67] As an AIFLD official recorded:

> The great paradox is that Vargas is enshrined by the Brazilian labor movement as its legendary hero and founder. His portrait is displayed in a place of honor in nearly every union headquarters. He is spoken with reverence as the first man to do something for the workers. It is clear that the "father image" created by Vargas, has been carefully nurtured by succeeding Brazilian administration. After over three decades of conditioning, it is almost a reflex action for workers and union leaders alike, to look to the government to resolve all matters that in the United States are the objects of free collective bargaining or contractual grievance procedure. This ties in very neatly with the harsh realities of the Brazilian labor scene.[68]

My analysis suggests that the American labor leaders' analysis may have been wrong in their claim that the corporatist system was the reason for all the ills

experienced by Brazilian workers. Recent studies in Brazilian labor history have shown that trade unionism before the 1964 coup was more vigorous and independent from the state than the critics of the corporatist system thought. It is thus important to underline how the actions of workers and union leaders influenced the corporatist system in their own interests. As Tamara Lothian has noted and as this study has shown, the political regime (democratic or dictatorial), was vital for the balance of forces between employers and employees and for the effective enforcement of Brazilian labor rights.[69]

Notes

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1. See Lincoln Gordon, *Progresso pela Aliança*. (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1962); John C. Dreyer, ed., *A Aliança para o Progresso: Comentários de Milton S. Eisenhower, Raul Prebisch, José Figueres, Teodoro Moscoso e Dean Rusk* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Fundo de Cultura, 1962).
2. Cecilia Azevedo, *Em Nome da América: Os Corpos da Paz no Brasil* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2008).
3. Lincoln Gordon, *A New Deal for Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 16.
4. The AIFLD in Brazil became known as the American Institute for the Development of Free Unionism (*Instituto Americano para o Desenvolvimento do Sindicalismo Livre*—IADESIL).
5. US Senate Subcommittee on American Republics Affairs. Survey of the Alliance for Progress, Labor Politics and Program, 90th Congress, 2nd Session (July 15) 1968.
6. The ICT was recognized by decree n. 42.099, June 24, 1963, signed by the governor of the state of São Paulo, Adhemar de Barros. The legal regulation of the institution, as well as its creation, formed part of a group of measures intended to avoid control of the AIFLD's activities by the Brazilian government.
7. The AIFLD was active in the Northeast region of Brazil, more specifically in the cities of Carpina, Ribeirão and Garanhuns, in the state of Pernambuco.
8. Beth Sims, *Workers of the World Undermined: American Labor's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1992), 79.
9. In the mid-1940s and 1950s, the Communist Party of Brazil (PCB) mobilized small farmers and poor rural workers all over the country, especially in the Northeast region. The "*Ligas Camponesas*" demanded redistribution of land without compensation. In the early 1960s, the movement, headed by Francisco Julião, alarmed landowners, political leaders, and the US government. See, Anthony W. Pereira, *The End of the Peasantry: The Rural Labor Movement in Northeast Brazil, 1961–1988* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997).
10. Gordon, *A New Deal for Latin America*, 5.
11. Cliff Welch, "Labor Internationalism: U.S. Involvement in Brazilian Unions, 1945–1965," *Latin American Research Review* 30 (1995).
12. For some examples, see George Morris, *American Labor: Which Way?* (New York: International Publishers, 1961) and *CIA and American Labor: The Subversion of the AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy* (New York: International Publishers, 1967); Fred Hirsch, *An Analysis of our AFL-CIO in Latin America or, Under the Covers with the CIA* (San José, CA: F. Hirsch, 1974); Hobart A. Spalding, "U.S. and Latin American Labor: The

Dynamics of Imperialist Control," *Latin American Perspectives* 3 (1976); Michael J. Sussman, *AIFLD, U.S. Trojan Horse in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Washington, DC: Epica, 1983); Peter Gribbin, "Brazil and CIA," *Counter Spy* (1979). More recently, consult the study of Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

13. Kim Scipes, *AFL-CIO's Secret War against Developing Country Workers. Solidarity or Sabotage?* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010).
14. James N. Green, *We Cannot Remain Silent. Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).
15. See Welch, 67.
16. Kenneth S. Mericle, "Corporatist Control of the Working Class: Authoritarian Brazil since 1964," in *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America,* ed., James M. Malloy (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).
17. For the panorama of the trajectory of the ORIT in Latin America, see Robert J. Alexander, "Labor and Inter-American Relations," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 334, Robert N. Burr, et al., eds., *Latin America's Nationalistic Revolutions* (1961).
18. See Welch.
19. Serafino Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons: Recollections of a Labor Ambassador in Latin America* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967).
20. Report written by Robert J. Alexander, May 13, 1956. Alexander traveled to Brazil in 1953 as a representative of the Free Trade Union Committee of the American Federation of Labor, making interviews and contacts with local people. According to Jay Lovestone, "In Brazil, his main task should be to improve the relationship of these unions with the AFL and explain to them our position in the international field. During his stay in Brazil, he may have an opportunity to gather additional information on the activities of the Communist movement." Correspondence between Jay Lovestone and Serafino Romualdi, box 9, file 1, Serafino Romualdi Papers, Kheel Center, Cornell University.
21. Paulo Fontes and Fernando T. da Silva, "Brazil, Labor Struggles," in *International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*, ed., Immanuel Ness (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 2009).
22. Ricardo Alaggio Ribeiro, *A Aliança para o Progresso e as relações Brasil-Estados Unidos* (Campinas, Brazil: Tese de doutorado, IFCH/Unicamp, 2006), 89.
23. Paul K. Erickson, *The Brazilian Corporative State and Working Class Politics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977).
24. Aviva Chomsky, *Linked Labor Histories: New England, Colombia, and the Making of a Global Working Class* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 235.
25. Carlos Fico, *O grande irmão – da operação Brother Sam aos anos de chumbo- o governo dos Estados Unidos e a ditadura militar brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2008).
26. René Armand Dreifuss, *1964: a conquista do Estado* (Petrópolis, Brazil: Vozes, 1981).
27. A well-known phrase by Juracy Magalhães when he was Brazilian ambassador to the United States during the military government of Castelo Branco (1964–1966). His declaration became a symbol of the period in which the Brazilian government privileged the economic interests of the United States. See the *Dicionário Histórico Biográfico Brasileiro pós 1930,* 2nd ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. FGV, 2001).
28. AIFLD, Country Plans for Latin America, Social Projects Department, 1964.
29. Juracy Magalhães, *Minha experiência diplomática* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editora, 1971).
30. AFL-CIO Sixth Constitutional Convention, December 1965, George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, MD (henceforth, GMMA), International Affairs Department (henceforth, IAD), Country Files, 1945–1971, Brazil, 016/11.

31. André Lara Resende, "Estabilização e reforma: 1964–1967," in Marcelo de Paiva Abreu, ed., *A ordem do progresso: Cem anos de política econômica republicana, 1889–1989* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Campos, 1990).
32. Interview with Luis Carlos Vasco by the author in August 2010.
33. US Embassy Report to U.S. Department of State, September 4, 1964 to June 1965, National Archives, College Park, MD (henceforth, NARA II), RG 59, Lab 3/box 1282.
34. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to U.S. Department of State, November 18, 1964, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3/box 1282.
35. US Embassy Report about the AIFLD educational program to Brazil sent to U.S. Department of State, July 1964 to June 1965, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3/box 1282, 1283.
36. According to research conducted by the ICT, more than half of the directors and presidents of trade union federations did not attend primary school and about 60 percent had never attended any course on union leadership. US Embassy Report to the U.S. Department of State, September 4, 1964. NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3/box 1282.
37. See Anthony W. Pereira, *Political (In)Justice: Authoritarianism and the Rule of Law in Brazil, Chile, and Argentina* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005).
38. Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964–1985* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
39. Margareth Keck, "The New Unionism in the Brazilian Transition," in *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation,* ed., Alfred Stepan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
40. US Embassy Report from São Paulo to the U.S. Department of State, November 14, 1964, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
41. US Embassy Report from São Paulo to the U.S. Department of State, July to December 1965, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
42. About the performance of US Ambassador John W. Tuthill, see his interview with the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History: memory. loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy/index.html.
43. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, April 14, 1966, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
44. Telegram for the State Department from the American Embassy to Brazil, March 11, 1967, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
45. *Última Hora*, edição Rio de Janeiro, December 21, 1967, 1.
46. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, February 21, 1968, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
47. *Última Hora*, edição Rio de Janeiro, January 17, 1968, 2–7.
48. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, February 29, 1968, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1282.
49. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, February 19, 1968, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1220.
50. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, February 29, 1968, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1220.
51. Manuscript text titled "*Fact Sheet on Brazil*" without author or date. GMMA, RG 18/4, box 16.
52. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the U.S. Department of State, March 16, 1967, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3–2/box 1286.
53. The Institutional Act number 5 (AI-5), which was issued on December 13, suspended constitutional guarantees and increased the dictatorial powers of the president of the republic. This Institutional Act also allowed the president to close the Congress.
54. See Ricardo Alaggio Ribeiro.

55. Regarding the denunciation in the United States of torture committed by the Brazilian military regime, see Green.
56. US Embassy Report from Rio de Janeiro to the US Department of State, April 26, 1968, NARA II, RG 59, Lab 3/box 1220.
57. Copy of the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, February 4, 1968, GMMA, RG 18/4.
58. Document number 52-Z-0–5861, August 4, 1972, Deops, Public Archive of São Paulo State.
59. Document number 50-J-0–2009, Deops, Public Archive of São Paulo State.
60. Memorandum to George Phillips from Angel Verdu, GMMA, RG-038, Office of the President, 68/25, Brazil, 1961–1975 & 1979.
61. See Green.
62. Letter by Andrew McLellan, Inter-American Representative of the AFL-CIO, to Alan Silberman, labor officer, January 20, 1970, GMMA, RG 018, 4/16.
63. In 1975, the AIFLD official, Angel Verdu, expressed concern when he was notified that the Brazilian office would close its doors. According to Verdu, there was no reason for the end of the activities since the results of the program seemed positive. Since 1963, more than 1,000 Brazilian trade unionists had taken part in courses held in the ICT, located in São Paulo, and another 30,000 workers had participated in regional workshops. Between 1963 and 1974, 279 trade unionists graduated from the Front Royal Institute. In addition, he pointed out the 225 projects funded by the Alliance for Progress, which totaled an investment of US $575,000 in Brazil. According to Verdu, 75 percent of the AIFLD graduates were aged between 20 and 35, were active in the labor movement, and thus represented a good prognosis for the implementation of "business unionism" among future union leaders. Memorandum to George Phillips by Angel Verdu, GMMA, RG-038, Office of the President, 68/25, Brazil, 1961–1975 & 1979.
64. Pablo Pozzi, "El Sindicalismo Norteamericano en América Latina y en la Argentina: El AIFLD entre 1961–1976," *Herramienta Review* 10 (1999).
65. Report titled "Brazil: Recent Past, Present and Future," GMMA, IAD, Country Files, 1945–1971, 016/11, Brazil.
66. See Keck, 258.
67. In this context, this commentary made by an American labor attaché appears significant: "Some labor leaders appear anxious to please the government, but the actions of these '*pelegos*' are eyed suspiciously by the rank and file. Government programs developed for the workers are long on promise, short on performance. Businessmen, both foreign and national, are content with the strong role which the government plays in worker affairs. The labor force is generally docile, non-militant and allows the government to make all major decisions for them. Except a few leaders who balance on the thin line dividing such legitimate activity as is permitted in Brazil and a more militant labor role common to other Latin America countries, there are not others with the desire or drive to change the current state of affairs." Report by labor attaché, John Ohmans, January 12, 1972, GMMA, RG 18–010 IAD, Country Files 1969–1971, file 5/11, Brazil, 1972.
68. GMMA, RG 038, Office of the President, file 68/25, Brazil, 1961–1975 & 1979.
69. Tamara Lothian, "The Political Consequences of Labor Law Regimes: The Contractualist and Corporatist Models Compared," *Cardozo Law Review* 7 (1986).

Chapter Eleven

Chilean Workers and the US Labor Movement: From Solidarity to Intervention, 1950s–1970s

Angela Vergara

In August 1969, AFL-CIO president George Meany appeared before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee to clarify the international role of the AFL-CIO and the use of funding received from the Agency for International Development (AID).[1] Responding to accusations that the AFL-CIO had received funding in exchange for supporting US foreign policy and US intervention in Vietnam, Meany argued the existence of a historical relationship among labor unions across the world and, especially, in the Americas. The AFL-CIO's international role was justified, Meany said, by the intertwined destiny of workers around the world. "We have a stake in the freedom of workers everywhere," he noted. "We have learned from experience that when workers in other countries lose their freedom where they are forced to submit to the yoke of a dictatorship or tyrannical government of any kind, their repression and enslavement constitute a grave threat to our own freedom. And of course, we have learned from the history of recent years that the very first to lose their freedoms are the workers."[2] In Latin America, explained Meany, their mission was to help Latin Americans "build unions which are strong, independent, representative of the workers and capable, through their own efforts, of improving the conditions of the workers, and making a contribution to the economic development of their own country."[3]

Meany's speech reflects the strong controversies around the international role of the AFL during the Cold War era. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the AFL's International Affairs Department supported the directions and ideology of US foreign policy and embraced the fight against communism and the Soviet Union. This Cold War ideology, however, was intertwined with a deep sense of international labor solidarity and a strong commitment to labor and union rights across borders. From the early twentieth century, many US labor leaders expected to spread the gospel of trade unionism that had characterized their own labor experience.[4] In 1951, the AFL encouraged and became an active member of the Inter-American Workers' Organization (ORIT) and, in the following years,

US labor leaders traveled throughout Latin America, raised money to support local struggles, and invited Latin American union leaders to visit the United States. Latin American labor leaders' responses toward the ORIT and the AFL were diverse and complex. Moving between rejection, uncommitted support, and enthusiasm, Latin American labor actors manipulated the anti-Communist discourse, and negotiated and obtained some economic and political resources from US labor unions, ORIT, and US diplomatic services.

These tensions have also made the US labor movement's Cold War international activities a controversial topic in world labor history, raising critical questions about the possibilities, opportunities, and limitations of international labor solidarity and organizing across borders. Traditionally, scholars have denounced the international role of the AFL and the AFL-CIO, describing them as enthusiastic supporters of the CIA and US foreign policy. By stressing their anticommunism, sectarian attitudes, and close relationship with US diplomatic services and labor attachés, historians have emphasized the involvement of US labor unions in the political struggles of the Cold War as well as the ways in which the CIA and the US Department of State co-opted and manipulated US labor organizations to win the war against communism—internally and abroad. The literature has also focused on some of the most emblematic anti-Communist characters such as Serafino Romualdi, Jay Lovestone, and George Meany, and, in doing so, authors have pictured Latin American labor unions either as victims of US labor imperialism or as strong resisters of US influences.[5] In the recent past, the topic has reemerged, and historians have questioned or at least problematized the alliance between labor leaders/unions and US state foreign policy, providing a bottom-up approach that gives insights about the complex meanings of trade union internationalism.[6]

Little is known, however, about the ways in which Latin American unions reacted, accommodated, used, and sometimes encouraged trade union internationalism. Recent studies on imperialism, neocolonialism, and foreign intervention have argued the need to contextualize and identify the wide range of forms and expressions of imperialism and recognize the role of local forces, actors, and elites, as well as the complexity of their motivations.[7] In addition, Cold War scholars have demonstrated the importance of exploring the different ways that people in the so-called world periphery perceived, lived, and understood the Cold War.[8]

As we revise and reread the history of US labor intervention and international solidarity, Latin American unions and leaders appeared less passive and their decisions more complex. Shaped by international, continental, and national politics, Latin American unions adapted to and contested these international forces, demonstrating the degree of agency of local labor leaders to negotiate and work within the framework provided by the United States and its Cold War policies. In this chapter, I examine the changing relationship between the AFL (and later the AFL-CIO) and Latin American labor leaders during the Cold War era through the organization and work of the ORIT and the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) in Chile. By looking at this relationship as a complex history of alliances, conflicts, and negotiations, I explore the motivations of Chilean labor leaders to both join and reject the ORIT and, later, the AIFLD. Moving

beyond the traditional approach that has interpreted this relationship as a case of imperialism and uncontested co-optation, I look at the topic as a complex and changing history of alliances and conflicts.

The Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT)

Throughout the 1950s, the ORIT was the most important project used by the AFL/AFL-CIO to shape Latin American labor and labor politics. ORIT's origins lay in the efforts of the AFL and some Latin American unions to create transnational alliances beginning in the early 1940s, the increasing political divisions within the Latin American labor movements, and the beginning of the Cold War. While these efforts were not new—from 1918 to 1930, the Pan-American Federation of Labor (PAFL) had brought together labor unions from Mexico, the United States, and the Caribbean—the international and local political climate of the Cold War created unique opportunities for collaboration.

Encouraged by the US State Department and its policy of hemispheric solidarity, the AFL's interest in Latin America grew consistently during World War II. To create a space in Latin America and build the foundations of an inter-American alliance, the AFL relied on the controversial figure of Serafino Romualdi. Born in Italy in 1900, Romualdi had escaped Fascism and migrated to the United States in 1923. After working for several newspapers in Chicago and New York, he joined the staff of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in 1933. Romualdi first traveled to South America in 1941 representing the Free Italy Committee. He stayed in South America until 1943, building support for the Allies within the Italian community and, apparently, establishing personal contacts with local labor leaders. In 1943, Romualdi joined the Labor and Social Relations Division of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA).[9] Led by Nelson Rockefeller, the OCIAA was intended to counter Nazi propaganda and infiltration in Latin America through programs of economic and cultural cooperation.[10] Although its most visible activities concerned propaganda and communications, its Labor and Social Relations Division led by John Herling developed contacts and programs with organized labor in Latin America. As Romualdi explained to Rockefeller in 1944, "Your organization is performing a highly commendable service which is bound to increase and expand because, as you have often asserted, inter-American labor relations do constitute a major foundation of the lasting edifice of people's Pan-Americanism."[11]

During the war years, Romualdi worked closely with the AFL's International Affairs Department and explored opportunities for formal collaboration with Latin American unions. In 1943, Romualdi recommended that the AFL should create a Latin American desk and carry a "program of education and publicity" that would "make our achievement and labor politics known to our brothers of Latin America, and vice versa."[12] This program included the publication of a bulletin in Spanish, dissemination of information about Latin America in the United States, establishment of relationships with Latin American labor leaders, and support for union drives. He especially recommended providing support "in the organization of unorganized Latin American workers, especially those employed in projects totally

or partly financed by US government grants, or employed in industries owned or financed by United States private capital."[13] Eventually, explained Romualdi, the Latin American desk would lead the movement to establish an inter-American labor organization.

Romualdi's efforts were also part of the US Department of State's increasing interest in influencing labor in the Americas. As historian Robert Spalding noted, the State Department started appointing labor attachés to its embassies in 1943. While their main purpose was to guarantee the production of strategic war material during World War II, labor attachés evolved into important and influential figures in the following years. Similarly, the US Labor Department started collecting information on regional labor legislation, union politics, and labor in general.

In the aftermath of World War II, Romualdi's efforts to build some sort of inter-American labor organization began to materialize. In early 1946, a group of Latin American labor leaders met with US leaders Meany and Romualdi at an International Labor Organization (ILO) conference in Mexico City. In September of that year, the International Relations Committee of the AFL invited Latin American labor leaders to attend the AFL Convention in Chicago following another ILO meeting in Montreal, Canada. The initiative, according to Romualdi, had come from "several labor people in Latin America."[14] Despite the AFL's eagerness to extend its influence to America Latina, the US Department of State was skeptical of the benefits of supporting an inter-American trade union project at the time because, as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs Spruille Braden argued in March 1946, it "would be most difficult to carry out such a project at this time without giving rise to accusations that this Government was attempting to practice an indirect form of intervention in the internal affairs of other American republics."[15] The efforts to influence the labor movement in Western Europe and shape postwar reconstruction probably made Latin America a less urgent priority for labor diplomats. In 1949, the United States promoted the foundation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), intending to recognize workers' contributions during World War II and fight against the Communist influence on the Western European labor movement.[16]

The efforts to create an inter-American labor organization slowly prospered in the following years. In January 1948, Chilean and Peruvian labor confederations—supported by Romualdi—sponsored a regional meeting in Lima and founded the Inter-American Confederation of Workers (CIT). From its start, the CIT was shaped by both the international politics of the Cold War (including the US agenda in Latin America) and the growing anticommunism within Latin American countries. On the eve of the conference, Romualdi wrote to Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles that it was their hope "to make the labor movement in Latin America, until recently dominated by the totalitarian forces of Communism and Fascism, a bulwark of socially conscious democracy, a link in the chain of Pan American solidarity, a force to be relied upon in the strengthening of the American way of life."[17] In doing so, Romualdi was not only attacking local Communist parties, but also the influence of populist and corporatist ideas on the Latin American labor movement—especially the Peronist influence on the

Argentine labor movement. As its secretary of international relations, Romualdi remained an influential figure within the CIT, leading it toward a more formal alliance with the AFL.[18]

In 1951, the ICFTU organized a congress in Mexico City with the purpose of creating regional organizations in the Western Hemisphere. In this meeting, the CIT turned into ORIT and became the ICFTU's Latin American branch. As had its predecessor, the ORIT looked to consolidate a non-Communist labor movement throughout the Americas and promote "free," "apolitical," and "democratic" trade unions. This discourse was an integral part of the strong and official anti-Communist wave that swept the United States and Latin America in the late 1940s and early 1950. The beginning of the Cold War and growing anti-communism created unique conditions for this new alliance. Beginning in 1947, Communist leaders were expelled and marginalized from the organized labor movement in the United States.[19] In tandem with US policy, Latin American governments outlawed Communist parties and persecuted leftist leaders, forcing labor unions to accommodate to this new repressive climate. In general, the anti-Communist legislation intensified tensions within the labor movement, dispersing and dividing labor unions and political forces and creating a unique space for the ORIT's influence.

This is clear in the case of Chile, where local labor politics between 1946 and 1953 were shaped by the division of the labor movement in 1946 and the impact of the Law of Defense of Democracy that outlawed the Communist Party in 1948.[20] Organized in 1936, the national labor confederation CTCH (*Confederación de Trabajadores de Chile*) represented the political interests and immediate demands of unionized workers. By the early 1940s, it included about 90 percent of Chilean union members, but suffered from serious internal political frictions that would eventually lead to its collapse.[21] A national strike in January 1946 exacerbated the existing political tensions and rivalries within the Confederation and, in May, it split into two political factions: A Communist wing led by Bernardo Araya and a Socialist faction under the leadership of Bernardo Ibáñez. The heavy repression against the Communist Party and Communist militants severed the possibilities of a strong union front, and most labor unions suffered in one way or another the consequences of state repression.

As the CTCH fell apart, some Chilean leaders looked at the ORIT for institutional and economic support. Bernardo Ibáñez had a personal relationship with Serafino Romualdi—evidenced in the personal tone of their letters—and maintained crucial contacts with the US labor movement even before the schism. In 1942, Ibáñez had traveled to the United States, invited by the AFL and the CIO. He had visited war facilities, met extensively with US labor leaders, proposed closer collaboration across the continent, and invited US labor leaders to visit Latin America and "extend a helping hand to their fellow workers 'south of the border.'"[22] Given the history between Ibáñez and the US labor movement, the AFL rapidly supported him during the CTCH schism, and Ibáñez actively sought the recognition of international organizations.[23] In the days following the division, Arturo Velázquez, a member of the director board of the pro-Ibáñez CTCH, met with George Meany and Serafino Romualdi in Mexico City during an ILO Conference.

Velázquez painted a gloomy picture of their financial situation, explaining that, as a result of the division, they had lost liquid assets and office equipment. Velázquez asked the AFL for a contribution of $3,000.[24] Three months later, Ibáñez successfully caught the attention of the AFL's International Affairs Department, warning about the dangers of communism in Chile. Following a conversation with Ibáñez, Romualdi concluded that Latin American Communist parties were "pouring into Chile money and organizers in great quantity, while our friends are more and more suffering from lack of it." Romualdi made an urgent call for immediate donations to the CTCH.[25]

The relationship between Ibáñez, a relatively obscure and unpopular leader in Chilean labor politics, the ORIT, and Romualdi suggests the difficulties of consolidating an anti-Communist labor agenda in Latin America. Despite Ibáñez's support, the ORIT remained a small organization in Chile and was unable to influence local labor politics. In 1952, it launched a new campaign to "rescue" the Chilean labor movement from the influence of communism and the populist threat represented now by the presidential candidacy of General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo. As a classic ORIT response to Communist threats, it appointed international labor leaders to Chile, organized an educational campaign, and allocated extraordinary economic resources (ORIT expected to raise no less than $10,000).[26] Again, this new campaign responded to Bernardo Ibáñez's efforts to obtain international support. During the meeting of the Executive Board of the ORIT in December 1952, Ibáñez was instrumental in raising the Chilean question and convincing the other board members that in Chile the so-called free trade union movement was in danger.[27] Given the confusing Chilean political situation in the early 1950s, ORIT's activities in Chile heavily responded to Ibáñez' advice and recommendations, because he maintained permanent and close contacts with Romualdi.

Besides its contacts with Ibáñez, the ORIT developed a short and very pragmatic relationship with the Chilean Confederation of Copper Workers (CTC). Representing workers in the US-owned and export-oriented copper mines, copper labor unions were the most powerful and successful unions in the country. While they made up only a very small percentage of the Chilean labor force, they worked in an industry that produced most of the Chilean foreign income as well as a considerable percentage of state revenues and gross domestic product.[28] Although they were also politically committed to the Left and intensely nationalistic, US labor leaders were not fond of major US mining companies and perceived Chilean mine workers as possible allies.

The formal contacts between the ORIT and Chilean copper workers dated from November 1951 when Luis López Aliaga from the ORIT met with the leadership of the recently organized CTC "for the purpose of reaching an agreement on future trade union cooperation among the two groups."[29] In that meeting, the CTC leadership invited representatives of the US labor movement and the ORIT to visit the country and the copper mines. The international union delegation—Paul Reed (United Mine Workers), Serafino Romualdi (AFL), and Angelo Verdu (CIO, International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers)—arrived in Chile on July 20, 1952.[30] They spent almost a week in the south, where they visited the coalfields, the steel plant of Huachipato, several industries near Concepción, and the copper mine of El Teniente. In Santiago, they met with President González

Videla and the US ambassador. From there, they traveled to Anaconda's properties in the north—Potrerillos and Chuquicamata—and the state-owned smelter plant at Paipote, Copiapó. ORIT members left Chile on August 5, explaining that the trip enabled them "to establish [a] closer relationship with" Chilean labor unions and especially with the CTC, with whom they would plan "future joint actions."[31] Although the CTC was a formal and active member of the ORIT for a few years, the relationship was limited to some international and economic support for copper workers' struggles because Chilean mining leaders never embraced a strong anti-Communist agenda.

The reunification of the Chilean labor movement in 1953 under the strong leadership of the Left represented a hard blow to the ORIT's anti-Communist agenda in the country. In 1953, the *Central Única de Trabajadores de Chile* brought together a large number of Chilean labor unions and included representatives from blue-collar and white-collar unions, public and private employees, and peasant organizations. Especially significant was its foundational document that stated its commitment to struggle against capitalism and for a classless society, radically distancing itself from the principles endorsed by the ORIT.[32] The ORIT clearly understood that, with the reunification of the Chilean labor movement, it "lost one of its milestones since the time of CIT."[33]

In the following years, the ORIT's weakness in Chile was evident. In 1954, Romualdi was concerned that despite all the effort and resources invested in Chile, the Communists remained strong in the labor movement and even in those unions affiliated with the ORIT.[34] By now, it only had four formal affiliated labor confederations in the country: What little remained from Ibáñez's CTCH, the Confederation of Oil Workers, the CTC, and the Maritime Workers' Confederation (COMACH). It also maintained friendly relationships with the confederations representing bakers, railroad workers, wine workers, transportation workers, shoemakers, public employees, garment workers, and mill workers. By 1955, Ibáñez's CTCH had dispersed and lost all support from the rank-and-file, and the only Chilean unions still affiliated to ORIT were the CTC, the National Federation of Bakers, the National Federation of Chemical and Pharmaceutical Workers, and the COMACH. In July 1955, the CTC withdrew from both the ORIT and the ICFTU, arguing that these international organizations had provided little economic support during past strikes, and the dues were too high.[35]

In the midst of this crisis, the ORIT looked for new political allies and established its first contacts with the *Falange Nacional* (after 1957, called the Christian Democratic Party). The *Falange*, created in 1938 by the progressive youth of the Conservative Party, was essentially a middle-class and anti-Communist political party inspired by Social Catholicism. In the early 1950s, led by the charismatic Eduardo Frei, it began expanding its influence from its traditional middle-class base among professionals and university students to urban and rural workers and women. Romualdi maintained contact with William Thayer Arteaga, former minister of labor during the Ibáñez administration and a closed collaborator of Eduardo Frei, and met with Frei in Washington, DC in May 1956.[36]

Following its traditional emphasis on union training, the ORIT organized a two-day institute in Santiago in November 1958, which brought 51 union officers from different parts of the country. The seminar mostly addressed the technical

aspects of collective bargaining, grievance handling, and union administration, and there is no evidence of a strong anti-Communist discourse. In charge of running the seminar was Daniel Benedict, a long-time US union activist who had worked with Walter Reuther at the CIO in the early 1950s and had recently become the director of the ORIT's union educational program in Mexico. As assistant general-secretary at the International Metalworkers' Federation in the 1960s, he continued to work closely with Latin American unions, and he consistently opposed CIA intervention within the AIFLD. There is little information on Benedict's role in the ORIT educational programs, but given his background, his later opposition to the AIFLD, and his support for workers' struggles in Chile and Brazil under dictatorships, he probably made the training programs attractive and useful spaces for Latin American labor leaders.

US Labor and Chilean Unions in the 1960s: The American Institute for Free Labor Development

As Cold War scholars have clearly pointed out, the Cuban Revolution marked a turning point in the history of US–Latin American relations, demonstrating the radicalization of the region and forcing the US government to redefine its diplomatic strategies. In 1961, President John Kennedy launched the Alliance for Progress (AFP), a commitment to invest in economic developmental projects and promote political reforms that would prevent "another Cuba" in the Western Hemisphere. In this context, the foundation of the AIFLD in 1962 was also a response to the Cuban Revolution and the loss of one of the closest Latin American allies to the AFL-CIO and the ORIT. As Meany himself explained: "In August 1960, when we came to a full realization as to what happened to the Cuban workers and the entire Cuban people under Castro, the AFL-CIO appropriated $20 thousand for the purpose of studying the establishment of a mechanism through which we could help strengthen the free labor unions of Latin America and develop trade union leadership. This led to the creation of the AIFLD, during the Eisenhower administration and long before the establishment of the AFP."[37]

The idea for the AIFLD also lay in the educational experiences of the Communication Workers of America (CWA). In 1959, the CWA had invited a group of Latin American union leaders to attend a training program at one of its international schools in Virginia. Given the success of this educational experience, in August 1960, the Executive Board of the AFL-CIO allocated $20,000 dollars "to study the feasibility of setting an institute 'to develop democratic trade union leaders in Latin America.'" [38] In September, the AFL-CIO's International Affairs Department announced its plan to create such an institute with an initial budget of a million dollars. By the end of 1961, President John Kennedy fully supported the idea by creating the Labor Advisory Committee of the AFP. In March 1962, Serafino Romualdi was appointed executive director of the AIFLD, and remained in this position until his retirement in 1965.

The AIFLD included representatives of the US business sector and received funding from the US government through AID. By 1970, AIFLD had representatives in 19 Latin American and Caribbean countries and sponsored programs for

union education and socioeconomic development. The AIFLD did not replace the ORIT, but it complemented its work. Because of its links with the US government and US embassy personnel, it was an especially controversial organization, inviting multiple accusations of being an excuse for CIA intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean. Like the ORIT, the AIFLD intended to promote a "democratic" and non-Communist union movement in Latin America, but it had a stronger emphasis (and economic capacity) to finance local social and economic development projects.

Unlike the ORIT, the AIFLD was constructed on the basis of cooperation between the union movement, management, and governments, and it was highly dependent on the economic support of the US government. As Meany explained in 1969, the AIFLD looked to attract "enlightened American business into this institution on the theory that they should also have an interest in developing friendly attitudes towards the building of free societies in Latin America."[39] This strategy created a strong resistance from local unions. For example, the Chilean Confederation of Copper Workers continuously rejected AIFLD invitations to participate in union training programs or visit the United States because Anaconda Copper Company was one of the so-called outstanding American businesses contributing to the AIFLD. As US labor attaché Thomas E. Walsh commented in 1962 on the opinion of the leaders of the Chilean CTC:

> Ovalle, Olivares, and Meneses told Labor Attaché that they could not defend Institute's program considering make-up of its Board of Trustees that includes Charles BRINCKERHOFF, President of Anaconda, and Peter J. GRACE [sic], President of Grace. They said usefulness and effectiveness of Institute's trainees would be limited at this time and might destroy future of these leaders in labor movement in Chile. Ovalle said that door is not closed and that he was interested in Institute and in possible programs for future. However, he would want to discuss potential programs in details to assure himself that entire project would be Chilean in character.[40]

While the ORIT incorporated different union confederations in an inter-American organization, the AIFLD was a top-down project and an instrument of the US government influenced by ideas of improving socioeconomic conditions throughout Latin America and building a non-Communist labor movement.

What did the AIFLD offer union leaders throughout the Americas? Educational programs were an important part of the AIFLD's work. With the cooperation of local unions, the AIFLD sponsored summer training programs throughout Latin America to discuss issues such as collective bargaining, administration of union funds, and the role of labor unions. Secondly, the AIFLD continued with the experience of the CWA, regularly sending local union leaders to their institute in Front Royal, Virginia. These courses lasted between 8 and 12 weeks, and included travel around the United States in order to, as Meany explained, "get a look at our free economy at work, to learn how American workers live, and to understand better how our trade unions operate." [41] They also organized extension courses at the college level. For example, Cornell University received funding from AID to finance labor extension activities and, in Chile, had an agreement with the state-supported University of Chile.

Despite the emphasis on education, social programs were the most attractive work provided by the AIFLD for local unions and they were closely tied to the agenda of President Kennedy's AFP. The AIFLD's social programs included low-income housing, local community and rural development programs, and consumer and credit cooperatives.[42] To carry out these projects, the AIFLD created a Social Projects Department that would contract directly with AID and other institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank and national governments. The construction of low-cost housing became the most important demand of local unions, accounting for 90 percent of the projects submitted by labor unions in Latin America in 1962.[43] The first housing project was in Mexico City, named after John Kennedy. It benefitted about 20,000 people.[44] Other social projects were intended to assist labor unions to develop small programs at the community level. In addition, in 1965, the AIFLD established a department for agricultural workers, the Agrarian Union Development Services, which focused on building community services for agricultural workers in Brazil's Northeast (Sergipe and Alagoas), Colombia (Halagaos and Fusagasuga), and Central America.[45]

Although Chile offered new possibilities for US influence and was one of the first countries to receive AFP funding, US influence on its labor movement remained extremely limited. Like the ORIT, the AIFLD attracted union leaders who were relatively marginalized from the Left-oriented labor movement, such as the port workers' union led by Christian-Democrat leader Wenceslao Moreno. As Table 11.1 suggests, the programs administered by the AIFLD favored maritime workers and longshoremen.

Historians have intensely debated the degree of US influence in Chile during President Salvador Allende's years, and although CIA support for the many military and extreme rightist coup plots is evident, the relevance of US-attempted influence on the labor movement is less clear. Most labor unions remained loyal to Allende and his political projects. The destabilization efforts came mostly from Right-wing political parties, which had no influence on the labor movement. Similarly, one of the most emblematic strikes against Allende was not technically a strike but a lockout organized by truck owners in October 1972 and probably financed by the United States.

New opportunities opened up for the AIFLD after the military coup of 1973. In the coup's aftermath, many labor leaders established new relationships with the US labor movement and with the AIFLD in an effort to accommodate and survive in a very repressive environment. Rather than accepting its agenda, as the AIFLD's Art Nixon explained, Chilean union leaders attended the AIFLD's meetings because they provided "a safe excuse for the leadership to get together."[46] Between 1973 and 1976, a period defined by historian Paul Drake as one of "devastation and hibernation" for the Chilean union movement, workers refrained from overt action and union membership dropped. While leftist union leaders were persecuted, assassinated, arrested, or driven into exile, nonleftist union leaders tried to adapt to the military rules and negotiated some space for participation.[47] However, the harsh social impact of government economic policies, the consolidation and institutionalization of General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, and the government's opposition to

Table 11.1 AFL-CIO Impact Projects Program (administered by AIFLD) Summary, September 13, 1968

Project and location	*Type of project*	*Unions involved*	*Type*	*Total cost*	*Status*
Valparaíso	JFK Tech. Library	Maritime Workers	Grant	$2000	Completed 8/66
Quilpué	Disaster Relief	COMACH, FIET, PTTI, ORIT	Grant and loan	$1908.10	Failed
Viña del Mar	Meeting Hall	Viña del Mar Union	Loan	$900	Completed 7/66
Calbuco	Launch Purchase	Community Coop	Loan	$5000	
Santiago	Social Center Reps.	FEGRECH	Grant	$160	Completed 11/66
Santiago	Community Center	JFK Brigade	Grant	$1000	
Corral	Policlinic equip.	FEMACH	Loan	$5000	
San Antonio	Community hall	Marineros auxiliares	Loan	$1000	
Coquimbo	Community center	Estivadores y jornaleros	Loan	$2000	
Calbuco	Communication equipment	Stevadores union	Grant	$620	
Valparaíso	Urbanization project	Railroad workers	Loan	$5000	

Source: Hoover Institution Archives, Jay Lovestone Collection, box 507, folder 2.

reestablishing the most basic of workers' rights such as union elections and collective bargaining severed the fragile "alliance" between nonleftist labor leaders and the military. As they moved to the opposition, they received strong support from US labor organizations.

In 1975, George Meany received an invitation from the dictatorship to visit the country. Turning down Pinochet, Meany declared that leaders from the AFL-CIO would not visit Chile until there was "a complete restauration [*sic*] of trade union rights and a return to the old system, as it existed in Chile before the regime of Allende."[48] Despite his clear dislike for Allende's government and misunderstanding of how Allende had guaranteed and empowered workers' rights, Meany's opposition to the Pinochet regime was significant. In the following years, the AFL-CIO and the ORIT maintained a close relationship with local democratic union leaders and continuously threatened to organize an international boycott against the Chilean government.[49]

Notes

1. "Statement by George Meany President, AFL-CIO," August 1, 1969. Kheel Center Archives (henceforth, Kheel), Philip Taft Collection (henceforth, PTC), box 6, folder 1.
2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.
4. Federico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951.* Trans. Harvey Fergusson, II (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).
5. See, for example: Jon V. Kofas, *The Struggle for Legitimacy: Latin American Labor and the United States, 1930–1960* (Tempe, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1992); Abraham F. Lowenthal, ed., *Exporting Democracy: The United States and Latin America: Case Studies* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); Hobart A. Spalding, "U.S. and Latin American Labor: The Dynamics of Imperialist Control," *Latin American Perspectives* 3 (1976); Cliff Welch, "Labor Internationalism: U.S. Involvement in Brazilian Unions, 1945–1965," *Latin American Research Review* 30 (1995). For a sympathetic view on US internationalism at the time, see Robert J. Alexander, *International Labor Organizations and Organized Labor in Latin America and the Caribbean: A History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009).
6. See, for example, the special forum in *Diplomatic History* 34 (2010), "Special Forum: Workers, Labor, and War: New Directions in the History of American Foreign Relations."
7. See, for example, Gilbert Joseph, Catherine Legrand, and Ricardo Salvatore, eds., *Close Encounters of Empire: Writing the Cultural History of US-Latin American Relations* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998); Julio Moreno, *Yankee Don't Go Home!: Mexican Nationalism, American Business Culture, and the Shaping of Modern Mexico, 1920–1950* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
8. For a general overview of the Cold War in Latin America, see Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spenser, *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008). An interesting approach to the Cold War Era from the perspective of local experiences is Jana Lipman, *Guantánamo: A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009).
9. Romualdi to Rockefeller, April 6, 1944, Kheel, Serafino Romualdi Collection (henceforth, SRC), box 9, folder 1.
10. Peter H. Smith, *Talons of the Eagle: Latin America, the United States, and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 81.
11. Romualdi to Rockefeller, April 6, 1944, Kheel, SRC, box 9, folder 1.
12. Serafino Romualdi, "Suggestions for the Setting Up of a Latin American Desk at American Federation of Labor's National Headquarters," November 18, 1943, Kheel, SRC, box 9, folder 1.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Romualdi, September 13, 1946, Kheel, SRC, box 9, folder 1.
15. Braden to Kellogg, March 6, 1946, Kheel, SRC, box 9, folder 1.
16. On the AFL and European unions, see Romero.
17. Romualdi to Wells, December 23, 1947, Kheel, SRC, box 19, folder 6.
18. Between 1948 and 1951, the CIT board included Bernardo Ibáñez (Chile, president), Francisco Aguirre (Cuba, general-secretary), and Arturo Jáuregui (Peru). For an overview of the first years, see ORIT, *15 años de sindicalismo libre interamericano* (Mexico: O.R.I.T., c. 1963).
19. In the case of the United States, as Ian Roxborough explains: "Immediately after the war the Truman administration embarked on a campaign to contain industrial militancy and in late 1946 successfully challenged the miners and their union led by John Lewis. The Taft-Hartley Labor Act of 1947, passed by Congress over Truman's veto, made it illegal for union leaders to belong to the Communist Party and was significant in rolling back leftist influence in the labor unions. In 1947–1948 the Communists were displaced from their leadership position in the UAW and the CIO and isolated within a limited number of relatively small unions." Ian Roxborough, "Labor Control

and the Postwar Growth Model in Latin America," in *Latin America in the 1940s: War and Postwar Transitions,* ed., David Rock, 260 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995).

20. In June 1948, the National Congress passed the Law of Permanent Defense of Democracy to protect Chilean "democracy." Enacted in September 1948, Law 8,987 outlawed the Communist Party, disenfranchised its members, and expelled them from the organized labor movement, the universities, and public office. It opened a decade of persecution, imprisonment, and underground politics in Chile. Internationally, the anti-Communist law responded to the strong pressures from the United States and its Cold War policies on Chile and Latin America. Since the presidential election of 1946, the US government had exerted political and economic pressures on the Chilean government to outlaw the Communist Party, declaring an "informal embargo" on credits to Chile. For an analysis on the local impact of this law, see Jody Pavilack, *Mining for the Nation: The Politics of Chile's Coal Communities from the Popular Front to the Cold War* (College Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011).
21. Alan Angell, *Politics and the Labour Movement in Chile* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 106–120.
22. "Relations between the Trade Union Movements of the United States and the Latin American Countries," *International Labour Review* 47 (1943): 670–671.
23. Serafino Romualdi, *Presidents and Peons: Recollections of Labor Ambassador in Latin America* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1967), 332.
24. Romualdi to Free Trade Union Committee, May 6, 1946, Kheel, SRC, box 2, folder 11.
25. Romualdi, August 3, 1946, Kheel, SRC, box 2, folder 11.
26. "Report of the Regional Secretary of the ORIT," December 17–18, 1951, Kheel, SRC, box 10, folder 1.
27. "Third Meeting of the Executive Board," Kheel, SRC, box 10.1, folder 7.
28. In 1970–1971, there were 24,156 people employed in the large-scale copper industry as blue-collar workers, white-collar employees, and supervisors. In 1973, its labor force was organized in 24 unions: 12 blue-collar labor unions (15,635 members), and 12 white-collar labor unions (8,889 members). Jorge Barría, "Organización y políticas laborales en la Gran Minería del Cobre," in *El cobre en el desarrollo nacional*, eds., Ricardo French-Davis and Ernesto Tironi (Santiago, Chile: Ediciones Nueva Universidad, c. 1974).
29. López Aliaga and Ovalle, "Agreement of Trade Union Cooperation between the ORIT and the Confederation of Copper Workers of Chile," November 13, 1951, Kheel, SRC, box 2, folder 12.
30. Chile's Embassy in Washington to Minister of Foreign Relations, September 9, 1952, Archivo Nacional de la Administración Central del Estado (also known as Archivo s. XX), Dirección General del Trabajo, Providencias, 1952, vol. 28.
31. "Report of the US Labor Delegation that visited Chile and Peru," *Inter-American Labor Bulletin* 2 (1952).
32. For a history of the CUT, see Jorge Barría Serón, *Historia de la CUT* (Santiago, Chile: Ediciones Prensa Latinoamericana, 1971).
33. ORIT, *15 años de sindicalismo libre interamericano*, 34.
34. Romualdi to Ibáñez, September 15, 1954, Kheel, SRC, box 10, folder 9.
35. Hugo Salazar Corral, "Informe sobre la situación de la confederación de trabajadores del cobre," 1955, George Meany Memorial Archives (henceforth, GMMA), International Affairs Department (henceforth, IAD), Staff Files: Serafino Romualdi's Files, 1945–1961, box 1.
36. Romualdi to Frei, Kheel, SRC, box 2, folder 11.
37. "Statement by George Meany President, AFL-CIO," August 1, 1969, Kheel, PTC, box 6, folder 1.

38. "Public Record of the AIFLD," Hoover Institution Archives (henceforth, Hoover), Jay Lovestone Files (henceforth, JLF), box 418, folder 5.
39. "Statement by George Meany President, AFL-CIO," August 1, 1969, Kheel, PTC, box 6, folder 1.
40. Thomas E. Walsh to Secretary of State, July 6, 1962, National Archives, College Park, MD, Department of State, RG 59, Chile 1960–1963, box 2396.
41. "Statement by George Meany President, AFL-CIO," August 1, 1969, Kheel, PTC, box 6, folder 1.
42. "Public Record of the AIFLD," Hoover, JLF, box 418, folder 5.
43. "Public Record of the AIFLD," Hoover, JLF, box 418, folder 5.
44. "Statement by George Meany President, AFL-CIO," August 1, 1969, Kheel, PTC, box 6, folder 1.
45. "The American Institute for Free Labor Development," c. 1970, Kheel, PTC, box 5, folder 62.
46. From Art Nixon to McLellan, April 11, 1975, GMMA, IAD, Country Files (1969–1981), box 5, folder 19.
47. Paul W. Drake, *Labor Movements and Dictatorships: The Southern Cone in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 123.
48. Meany to Valencia, April 8, 1975, GMMA, IAD, Country Files (1969–1981), box 5, folder 19.
49. Maintaining their distance from the Left, especially the Communist Party, nonleftist union leaders formed the "Group of Ten" in December 1975. The "Group of Ten" was made up of Manuel Bustos (textile workers' union), Pedro Cifuentes (sugar workers' union), Andrés del Campo (bank workers' union), E. Díaz (maritime workers' union), Tucapel Jiménez (public employees' union), Enrique Mellado (peasant federation), Antonio Minimiza (oil workers' union), Francisco Mujica (private employees' union), Eduardo Ríos (maritime workers' union), Guillermo Santana (Copper Workers' Confederation), and Ernesto Vogel (railway workers). They were all members of the Christian Democracy except for Jiménez, who was a member of the Radical Party. The Group of Ten evolved over time: In 1981, it became the Democratic Union of Workers and in 1984, the Confederation of Democratic Workers.

Part IV

A Diplomatic Touch: Labor's Ambassadors in Africa and Asia

Chapter Twelve

Irving Brown and ICFTU Labor Diplomacy during Algeria's Struggle for Independence, 1954–1962

Mathilde von Bülow

> *"Irving Brown has been the master corrupter in North Africa, where he has set up trade unions the essential objectives of which is to fight against us."*[1]

With these words, Minister Resident Robert Lacoste justified his decision, taken early in May 1956, to ban the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization's (AFL-CIO) long-standing European representative from setting foot in Algeria. Lacoste's pronouncement did not come as a surprise. This was, after all, not the first time that Brown and the American labor movement, or the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to which they belonged, stood accused of meddling in French North African affairs. Since 1950, French officials had repeatedly objected to the Confederation's backing of nationalist labor centers in the protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco.[2] Their most vitriolic attacks were typically reserved for the AFL's Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), and especially its "cloak-and-daggering" agent in Europe, Irving Brown, who maintained close contacts with North African trade unionists.[3] Referred to by *Time* magazine as "the most dangerous man" in Europe, by French journalists as "the Quiet American" and "*grand manitou*" (big shot) in the ICFTU, and by one American diplomat as "a one-man anti-Cominform," Brown had long enjoyed a reputation as one of the most powerful and influential men in Cold War Europe.[4]

Backed both overtly and covertly by the US State Department and Central Intelligence Agency, American trade unionists, of course, considered themselves vital auxiliaries in the Cold War crusade against communism and totalitarianism, convinced, as they were, that the road to democracy went hand in hand with the development of a free labor movement.[5] As Brown's direct superior in the FTUC, Jay Lovestone, would put it:

> To aid in the settlement of the Cold War in favor of the West—and indeed in the formulation of foreign policy in general . . . the A.F.of L. is convinced that independent

> organizations should be free, not only to propose policies to the governmental agencies, but also to carry out independent activities in foreign lands. Much can be done on an independent basis that cannot be done through governmental representation and/or instigation. Foreign affairs at the present time require vigorous volunteer action. Such action, when taken by the A.F. of L. or the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, in which the A.F. of L. is the largest affiliate, is contained by no rules of behavior, no tradition of methods, and no doctrinaire answers. In response to specific problems, the A.F. of L. practices trial and error, and unorthodox methods.[6]

During the late 1940s, these independent initiatives and unconventional practices were concentrated primarily on Europe, where Brown famously helped to engineer not only the formation of anti-Communist trade union federations in France and Italy, but also the creation of the ICFTU itself as a Western-oriented alternative to the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).[7] Over the course of the 1950s, however, Lovestone and Brown increasingly came to focus on Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, where the rise of anticolonial nationalism and neutralism threatened Western positions and interests. Anxious to prevent these regions from drifting into the Soviet orbit, or that of perceived firebrands such as Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser, American labor encouraged the development of independent, well-organized trade unions in the colonial (and postcolonial) world, and sought to harness these unions to the free world's labor movement. This policy was not altogether popular within the labor international and bred resentment particularly on the part of its French and British affiliates.[8]

Having already championed the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens* (founded in January 1946) as well as the *Union Marocaine du Travail* (founded considerably later, in March 1955) against French wishes, by 1956, Brown stood accused of meddling in Algeria, France's last and most prized North African possession. It could be no coincidence, so the argument went, that just as France's two protectorates were about to gain their independence, Algeria—itself in the midst of an increasingly violent anticolonial insurgency—saw the emergence, for the first time, of two autonomous, nationalist trade union centers.[9] To French observers, it seemed clear that "certain powers," notably the United States, were "seeking to reap the heritage of France" in North Africa, as Foreign Minister Christian Pineau admonished in a statement on March 2, 1956.[10] Rather than interfering directly, however, these powers relied on nongovernmental intermediaries, notably the trade union movement, to achieve that goal. Mimicking Pineau, Lacoste (who was himself a former trade unionist) accused Brown of associating with nefarious elements who sought "the elimination of French influence in North Africa through the formation of a large North African trade union federation."[11]

Considering the intense interest the French authorities took in the North African activities of Brown, American labor, and the ICFTU, the actual relationship between the international trade union movement and Algeria's independence struggle remains surprisingly obscured.[12] Yet, even a cursory glance at the records of the International Confederation and those of its largest

affiliate—the AFL-CIO—reveals that organized labor was in fact highly active during Algeria's war of independence. This realization raises several interesting questions, notably, what prompted the international labor movement to take up the Algerian nationalists' cause, and how did it contribute to the Algerian struggle against colonial domination? More pertinent to this intervention is the question as to what role Irving Brown actually played in the development of Algerian nationalist trade union centers. Was Brown really the "master corruptor" Lacoste accused him of being; and did he really aim to eliminate French influence in Algeria and North Africa? To answer these questions, this paper will examine Irving Brown's role in the formulation and execution of the ICFTU's Algerian policies between 1956 and 1962. First, however, one needs to turn to the circumstances that resulted in the creation of Algerian nationalist labor centers in the first place, as well as their relationship to the Western world's largest labor International.

Trade Unionism and Anticolonial Nationalism in French Algeria

Organized labor is often credited with having played an important part in the decolonization of French Africa, for in a colonial context it was not always easy to distinguish between regulations that aimed at safeguarding capitalist profit and measures that aimed at keeping law and order.[13] By exploiting the instruments of French industrial relations (strikes, collective bargaining, mass mobilization) on the one hand and the rhetoric of French imperial rule (colonialism as a force for progress and modernization) on the other, African trade unions became adept at contesting the legitimacy not only of the colonial economy but also of colonial rule itself. In this manner, they were able to merge the class struggle for social and economic advancement with the nationalist struggle for political emancipation.[14]

Contrary to other parts of the French colonial empire, where trade unions first emerged during the 1930s, and growing substantially during the postwar drive for economic modernization, organized labor movements appeared in Algeria as early as the 1880s.[15] While incremental concessions toward the rights to organize, strike, and bargain collectively had led to the development of largely indigenous trade unions in most of French-speaking Africa, Algeria remained a case apart. Owing to the territory's constitutional incorporation into the French Republic and the presence of a large and well-organized working class of European origin, Algeria's laborers were firmly integrated into the metropole's various trade union confederations. Although Algerians (usually referred to as *indigènes*—natives, or *Musulmans*—Muslims) began to be admitted to trade unions during the 1920s, the labor movement was dominated by European settlers. Most Algerians continued to work in agriculture, which, in 1954, still employed 75 percent of the economically active population. Industry and mining, on the other hand, accounted for a mere quarter of total production. As a result, by the 1950s, unionized workers represented about 10 percent of the gainfully employed population in Algeria.[16] Of the French trade union centers that operated in Algeria, only the powerful and Communist-oriented *Confédération Générale du Travail* (CGT) had attracted a sizeable Muslim membership, drawing largely from the railway, ports and docks,

and construction sectors.[17] During 1945–1952, the CGT counted between 80,000 and 150,000 members in Algeria, of whom approximately 40 to 60 percent were Muslim. By contrast, the CGT's two largest rivals, the Socialist-oriented *Force Ouvrière* and Social Christian Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens, had approximately 20,000 and 30,000 overwhelmingly European members.[18]

In response to mounting nationalist and anticolonial agitation, the CGT's local branch in 1954 severed its ties from the mainland, establishing an autonomous federation, the *Union générale des syndicats algériens*. Though determined to "Algerianize" its membership and leadership, the federation continued to toe the CGT's line. In the fight against colonialism, its strategy remained firmly linked to the class struggle, following the Leninist principle that the "liberation of North Africa's indigenous proletariat will only follow from a metropolitan revolution [of the French working class]."[19] To many Algerian unionists, however, this approach had become increasingly untenable as it failed to address the racially based inequalities and ingrained injustices of the colonial system, where even the European proletariat enjoyed more rights and freedoms than its indigenous counterpart. These unionists were keen to widen, and hence politicize, their struggle by including those hitherto underrepresented: notably agricultural workers and the unemployed. Their aim was not to work within the confines of the colonial economy but to destroy it altogether.[20] Even so, by the time the National Liberation Front instigated its war of independence on November 1, 1954, there was as yet no Algerian labor movement that represented the interests of the colonized.[21]

The progressive imposition of martial law between April 1955 and March 1956 changed this reality profoundly, as did the ever-intensifying rivalry for control of the Algerian people between the National Liberation Front and Messali Hadj's Algerian National Movement. Trade union federations became one of the vehicles through which both movements strove to influence, organize, and mobilize large blocs of Algeria's population. February 1956 therefore witnessed the creation of not one, but two national trade union federations: the *Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Algériens* (USTA), which remained loyal to Messali Hadj; and the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens* (UGTA), which aligned itself with the National Liberation Front. Both federations recruited their leaders and members from the now largely defunct *Union générale des syndicats algériens* (UGSA).[22]

By then, the idea of harnessing organized labor to the cause of anticolonial nationalism was no longer new. In Tunisia, the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens* had worked closely with the Neo-Destour party to secure full independence in March 1956.[23] Algerian nationalists sought to emulate this success. As early as 1947, the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties (MTLD), from which both "Messalists" and "Frontists" would later emerge, had established a Commission for Social and Trade Union Affairs tasked with the "systematic envelopment and infiltration of the CGT."[24] Working through the CGT, the commission's aim was to organize workers' cells throughout the country, which could become operational in the nationalist struggle once the time was ripe.[25] It was on these cadres that Messalist and Frontist unionists drew in order to constitute their respective trade union centers. By 1957, the Messalist USTA counted approximately 105,000 members, while the Frontist UGTA counted up to 150,000. Both

movements thus greatly surpassed all other Algerian trade union centers in membership numbers. Yet while the USTA recruited all but 5,000 of its members in the metropole, the UGTA from the start was able to dominate in Algeria.[26] Its secretary-general, Aïssat Idir, had been the chairman of the MTLD's Commission for Social and Trade Union Affairs since 1947. A civil servant who headed a family benefits office, Aïssat Idir was also one of the most capable and experienced Algerian *cégétistes* (member of the CGT).[27] Like its political patron, therefore, it was the UGTA that ultimately triumphed over its rival in the contest for influence and representation.

Commenting on the formation of Algeria's nationalist trade unions in March 1956, French journalist Rémy Roure perceptively argued that both were bound to run into trouble with the authorities. After all, while Algerian workers were legally entitled to form new associations, they were also obliged to conform to the French laws that governed trade union activities. In particular, the new labor centers had to abstain from activities that did not pertain to professional and socioeconomic matters. In the first issue of its official paper, *L'Ouvrier algérien*, the UGTA defined its role as organizing Algeria's agricultural and industrial workers along free and democratic lines in order to put an end to their exploitation by the colonial regime. To achieve this, the federation sought "a revolution in the political, economic and social domains."[28] In other words, the federation saw its role in political as well as socioeconomic terms; most of its leaders were also members of the National Liberation Front. As Roure had put it: "To openly side with the [nationalist] rebels, to want to introduce racial discrimination between employees, are reason enough to justify measures of control and defence against these unions."[29] To be fair, both of the new trade union centers claimed to be independent from political control and open to workers regardless of race or religion. Yet as neither attempted to hide its political aspirations and proclivities, Roure's arguments soon formed the pretext for a wave of increasingly repressive measures that began with the banning of union elections in plants and administrations shortly after their foundation, continued with the prohibition of both federations in early 1957, and ended in the death under suspicious circumstances of their most prominent leader, Aïssat Idir, in July 1959.[30] In the end, the creation of two national labor movements at the height of a bitter colonial war was nothing, if not an act of political defiance. One German diplomat in Paris considered the development "a declaration of secession by Algerian workers."[31] Alfred Grima Johnson, the American vice consul in Algiers and a CIA agent, perfectly encapsulated the dilemma arising from this situation when he wrote that, for "the French Government to admit the legal recognition of either the UGTA or the USTA is, simultaneously, to admit, even though by inference only, the legal recognition of the Algerian nationalist movement."[32]

The Question of International Affiliation

In view of this dilemma, it is hardly surprising that the question of the new federations' international affiliation also became a matter of considerable political significance, especially since both were also meant to act as a "window to the world" for Algerian nationalists.[33] In fact, trade unions would come to constitute

one of the principal instruments of what Matthew Connelly has called the "foreign policy of national liberation," a policy that relied as much on the moral and material support of nonstate actors as it did on the diplomatic backing of nation-states.[34] Almost immediately after its creation, the USTA formally applied to join the ICFTU.[35] This placed the International in a quandary. Already in December 1955, a joint delegation of "Messalist" and "Frontist" militants had visited the Confederation's headquarters in Brussels to solicit financial assistance for the creation of an autonomous Algerian trade union federation to rival and replace the Communist UGSA.[36] At the time, their reception had been "reserved, if not to say frosty." General-secretary Jacobus Oldenbroek refused to enter into any commitments without proof that the Algerians would in fact succeed in establishing a truly autonomous, non-Communist trade union federation. Even Irving Brown, whom some delegation members visited in Paris, agreed to support the Algerians only after further investigation. One of the Algerian representatives, Boualem Bourouïba, could understand Brown and Oldenbroek's reserve. After all, every Algerian trade unionist had formerly been a Communist *cégétistes*.[37]

Equally problematic for the International in assessing Algerian membership was the attitude of its French affiliate, the *Force Ouvrière*. Of course, nothing in the Confederation's statutes prevented the admission of more than one national affiliate.[38] Nor was this the first occasion where the organization had to contemplate the admission of national trade union centers from territories under European colonial control: Against the objections of the *Force Ouvrière*, both the Tunisian and the Moroccan affiliates had joined the organization before either protectorate had achieved political independence. The French trade union center was itself deeply divided over the question of Algerian affiliation. One faction, led by the union's general-secretary, Robert Bothereau, believed that from an economic vantage point, France could do without its colonies, and championed a liberal and pragmatic course in Algeria that included an immediate cessation of hostilities and direct negotiations with the various representatives of Algerian nationalism. Another faction, which though smaller remained highly influential, took a much more hawkish view. Led by Director of Overseas Affairs André Lafond, and influenced in large part by the federation's members in Algeria, this faction was unwilling to contemplate any concessions toward the nationalists and favored a policy of full integration between France and Algeria.[39]

The decisive voice within the labor International, however, was not the *Force Ouvrière*; it was the AFL-CIO. After all, at one-million strong, *Force Ouvrière* was only the sixth largest European federation in the organization. The American Federation, on the other hand, counted approximately fifteen million card-carrying members. Whether numerically, financially, or in terms of political clout, American labor thus had a decisive voice in the International's proceedings.[40] Having already championed the affiliation of the *Union générale des travailleurs tunisiens* and *Union marocaine du travail,* the Federation's attitude toward the new Algerian trade union centers was bound to be encouraging. Just one month after the creation of the Algerian unions, AFL-CIO President George Meany wrote to Brown expressing support for affiliation by one of the new trade unions. The question was which one: the USTA, which had made an application; or the UGTA, which had yet to reach a formal decision on

which confederation to join, but was already being championed by Moroccan and Tunisian unionists? This dilemma was compounded by the fact that the UGTA's members were largely drawn from the CGT, making them just as likely to opt for membership in the Communist WFTU as in the ICFTU.[41] To prevent this from happening, Meany recommended sending a delegation of ICFTU unionists "of some standing" to Algeria, so as to determine which of the two was more representative of Algeria's work force.[42] The International's executives accepted this recommendation and sent a delegation comprising President Omer Becu, Secretary General Oldenbroek, Brown, and Bothereau to Paris in view of securing the French government's approval.[43]

Initially, French consent appeared to be forthcoming. At a meeting with the ICFTU representatives in Paris on April 23, 1956, Lacoste warned against any association with the new trade union federations on the grounds that both were Communist fronts. "I will make you a bet, that in two or three years Algeria will be a People's Democracy," the minister insisted. Brown took up the wager. Having met Algerian trade unionists on a number of occasions since 1950, he remained convinced that their nationalist convictions would ultimately trump their Communist beliefs.[44] It was probably this confidence, combined with his previous North African policies, that led to Brown's undoing with the French. After the meeting, the American chargé d'affaires in Paris, Theodore Achilles, warned that Brown's inclusion on any mission to Algeria in the current volatile climate would cause uproar. Douglas Dillon, the American ambassador in Paris, even feared his assassination.[45]

It came as no surprise, therefore, when on May 9, 1956, Lacoste barred Brown (and the ICFTU mission) from visiting Algeria. The statement announcing this decision accused Brown, "under the pretext of trade unionism [of carrying] on overbold activity with doubtful personages [and] with the greatest contempt for the legitimate interests and indisputable positions of France in Algeria and North Africa."[46] As proof, Lacoste charged Brown with conniving against France with the president of the *Jeune Chambre économique d'Alger*, Guy Gomis, and of having funneled 30 million French francs to Algerian trade unionists since 1953.[47] Lacoste seemed convinced that the new federations' creation had been orchestrated by none other than Brown, the American labor movement, and their puppet and proxy, the ICFTU.

Needless to say, both Brown and Meany vehemently denied these accusations, though both remained unrepentant about their active interest in North African labor questions. In a sharply worded letter to Socialist French prime minister Guy Mollet, Meany expressed his shock at the "inflammatory accusations against Brown":

> We, of the free trade union movement of America, feel that there is an absolute need to guide the evolution now taking place in North Africa into the channels of democracy, rather than dooming these movements, by our inaction or negative action, to be taken over by one totalitarian force or another. It is precisely here that American trade union forces, through the ICFTU, have made and will seek to continue to make a lasting contribution to the democratic solution of the Algerian question and to the defeat of the mortal enemies of France—the totalitarian forces and their allies in the entire Middle Eastern Arab world.[48]

To Oldenbroek, Lacoste's vilification of Brown was as much a jibe against the AFL-CIO and the labor International as it was an effort to discredit the two labor federations that had just been formed in Algeria.[49] At the same time as these quarrels unfolded on the international stage, Lacoste's ministry initiated a major crackdown on the Algerian unions. On May 23, the authorities in Algiers arrested 150 trade unionists, including Aïssat Idir and the entire UGTA secretariat. Under the special powers granted them by the National Assembly, the police required no specific charge against these men, who were detained "in the interest of national security."[50] On July 1, just days before the federation planned to stage its first general strike to commemorate the 126th anniversary of the French landings at Sidi Ferruch, an explosion at the center's headquarters in Algiers served as a pretext for a second round of arrests and confiscations. Although the authorities maintained that it had been sparked by a gas leak, it later transpired that the explosion had been no accident. These moves had a devastating effect on the UGTA, for they robbed the federation of its most experienced cadres. Henceforth, the National Liberation Front would "parachute" political appointees into the federation, who were chosen more for their willingness to toe the party line than their knowledge of trade unionism.[51]

While these developments contributed to a further disruption of trade union activities within Algeria, they helped to promote particularly the UGTA's cause on the international stage. Indeed, whatever reserve Meany and his European representative had once felt toward the UGTA had by then clearly evaporated. The very fact that the French authorities appeared to clamp down on that trade union center much more severely than on its rival suggested that it represented "the overwhelming majority" of Algerian workers, while the USTA, in the words of Brown, "represent[ed] nothing in Algeria."[52] The ICFTU executive board reached a similar conclusion when it discussed the question of affiliation at its July 2–7 meeting. During the deliberations, Brown urged the board to decide quickly and without the benefit of a mission to Algeria. "Unless we move now," he warned, "we would not only lose the initiative and the faith and support of our already existing North African affiliates," who supported the UGTA, "but would give issues to the propaganda and organization services of the Arab League and the Communists."[53] Brown was vehemently opposed by Bothereau, who felt that the admission of an Algerian affiliate should await the determination of Algeria's political future.[54] Needless to say, Brown had his way and the Board voted sixteen against two (with two abstentions) in favor of the UGTA's membership.

The Struggle over "Honest-to-Goodness" Trade Unionism

To Vice Consul/CIA agent Alfred Grima Johnson, the political significance of this vote was immense, for "when the ICFTU admitted the UGTA as an affiliate member, it was, in fact, recognizing the theoretical existence of a national Algerian state."[55] Apart from its symbolic importance, however, the creation of formal relations between the Algerian federation and the labor International also served concrete ends. From Brown's perspective and that of the free world labor movement, the plight of the UGTA stood out as a shining example of colonial oppression, a practice that the International had officially condemned at its 1952 General Council

in Berlin and its 1953 World Congress in Stockholm.[56] The brutal conflict taking place in Algeria, which resulted in the violation and ultimate suspension of labor legislation (at least with regard to Muslim Algerians), the detention without trial of trade unionists, the seizure of the UGTA's newsletter, *L'Ouvrier Algérien*, and the general deterioration of working conditions warranted and indeed demanded the Confederation's intervention on behalf of its beleaguered affiliate. What better way, moreover, "to eliminate the last vestiges of colonialism," which had become Brown's chief strategy for "winning the 'cold war.'" Versed as he was in the Marxist-Leninist tradition he so vehemently opposed, Brown believed trade unionism was nothing if not the continuation of war by other means.[57] Over the next six years, Brown and his superiors in the AFL-CIO therefore pushed the labor International to support the beleaguered UGTA. Although some executive board members such as Bothereau and Oldenbroek maintained a reserved, if not hostile, attitude toward the Algerian center, the Americans preferred concerted policy over individual action.[58] After all, legally as well as politically Algeria remained an internal French problem (though this did not prevent Lovestone and the AFL-CIO's New York office from lobbying American diplomats and the United Nations on the National Liberation Front's behalf).[59]

For its part, the aid and assistance provided by the International developed only gradually. Initially, its character remained largely symbolic. In an effort to proclaim its solidarity with the UGTA and the Algerian people, for instance, the ICFTU passed one resolution after another condemning the cycle of violence in Algeria. Though ostensibly appealing to both sides of the conflict, the resolutions indicted French policies and practices in Algeria and endorsed the Algerians' right to independence. Successive and well-publicized appeals addressed to the French government on the one hand and the United Nations on the other pleaded not only for the release of detained labor leaders and the resumption of normal trade union activities, but also for the cessation of hostilities, the recognition of Algeria's right to self-determination, and direct negotiations with the "authentic" representatives of the Algerian people, that is, the National Liberation Front.[60] Following the brutal repression of the eight-day general strike of 1957 and the definitive prohibition of the UGTA in Algeria, the ICFTU also submitted a number of formal complaints to the International Labor Organization, the United Nations' umbrella agency charged with the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human rights and labor standards.[61]

The ICFTU also persisted in its efforts to send a mission that included Brown to Algeria to investigate allegations of abuse and torture incurred by detained trade unionists.[62] Since these remained fruitless, the International opted instead to involve itself in the legal defense of Aïssat Idir and four of his colleagues, who, after more than two years of detention, stood trial before the Algiers military tribunal in January 1959 for endangering French national security and associating with dangerous elements (i.e., the National Liberation Front). With the help of Henri Rolin, a prominent Belgian lawyer and senator, the tribunal acquitted Aïssat Idir. To the ICFTU, and especially its Algerian affiliate, this proved a real victory, one that gave rise to optimism and hope.[63] It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the authorities' refusal to release the Algerian labor leader, and the news five months later, of his mysterious death in a military hospital, outraged the International's

leaders. Much like the assassinated Tunisian labor leader Ferhat Hached before him, Aïssat Idir now became a potent symbol both of the international struggle to secure workers' rights and freedoms from colonial oppression and of Algeria's bitter struggle for national liberation.[64] George Meany issued a sternly worded telegram expressing his "shock and grief" at Aïssat's death. On behalf of the AFL-CIO, he called upon French president Charles de Gaulle to "put [the] full weight of his great moral authority and political prestige into assuring prompt action to end [the] war in Algeria by negotiating [a] just and honorable peace with [the] heroic Algerian forces fighting for [the] national independence of their country."[65] However well intended, such intercessions failed to persuade the French government to issue visas to Brown or other ICFTU delegates who wished to visit Algeria; nor did they secure the authorities' agreement to an independent investigation into the conditions of Algerian workers and trade unionists.[66]

This labor International's inability to influence French policy highlights a criticism that has repeatedly been leveled against the organization: Namely, the fact that it is one of those "resolution machines . . . [where] plenty of declarations are produced but very little of practical significance gets done."[67] The sentiment was certainly shared by Algerian trade unionists. Just half a year after joining, the UGTA was at a loss to understand why the International had mobilized all its resources on behalf of Hungarian workers after the 1956 uprising while making only "platonic gestures" toward Algeria's laborers who were equally fighting for their freedom. The center appealed to the ICFTU "to manifest its solidarity in a more effective and concrete manner."[68] To the International's executives, the appeal hardly came as a surprise. As Willi Richter, president of the West German Federation of Trade Unions would point out: For Algerian unions, affiliation to the ICFTU was not only a matter of standing but also a matter of money.[69]

The UGTA's appeal was suitably timed, for it coincided with the inauguration of the ICFTU's International Solidarity Fund, a multipurpose "freedom fund to assist workers who fall victim to repressive measures whether emanating from totalitarian regimes, colonial regimes, or from hostile governments and employers." By March 1957, the fund had donated a total of $35,000 "to several countries, including Algeria."[70] Much to Brown's frustration, however, the ICFTU was reluctant to increase this contribution. After the near total disruption of trade union activity in Algeria following the January 1957 general strikes and the UGTA's move into exile in Tunis, some of the executive board's members, including Oldenbroek, continued to question the federation's credibility as a worthy recipient of aid. Even holding the International's world congress in Tunis in July 1957—the first to be held outside Europe—did not change this situation. Although the congress set a "sharp accent on the anti-colonial theme and the struggle for national independence," its executive, in Brown's words, failed "to dramatize one or two big issues which would enable the ICFTU to play a role in the present situation, especially in relation to such issues as [nuclear] disarmament, Hungary, Algeria . . . "[71]

Only the French aerial raid on the Tunisian village of Sakiet-Sidi-Youssef on February 8, 1958, which sparked an international crisis, galvanized the International into greater action. Reporting on a visit to Tunis shortly after the tragedy, Brown

warned of the increasing impatience and disillusionment that Algerian trade unionists felt toward the ICFTU and AFL-CIO, and of the growing danger that they would defect to the East. "This is especially true," Brown wrote, "to the extent that the international free trade union movement [the ICFTU] or any of its national affiliates have been unable to influence effectively or change what appears to be the free world's policy in Algeria as now represented by the French."[72] The Solidarity Fund subsequently agreed to step up its humanitarian efforts on behalf of the UGTA (a gesture that was perceived as suitably neutral vis-à-vis the French), setting aside $50,000 to alleviate the plight of Algerian refugees who were arriving in Tunisia and Morocco by the tens of thousands.[73] By the end of the year, the Solidarity Fund had spent $55,000 on labor education programs and aid to Algerian refugees. The International budgeted in a further $46,714 for 1959 to help fund a vocational training scheme administered by the UGTA in Tunis.[74] Ultimately, however, this money fell well short of the $200,000 worth of material assistance that the Algerian trade union center had requested, and it certainly did not compare to the material donations being made by members of the WFTU.[75]

Indeed, faced with a worsening humanitarian crisis and a deteriorating military position, the National Liberation Front felt few scruples in accepting assistance from either side of the Iron Curtain and expected its labor associate to do the same. As the UGTA's leaders made clear in *Ouvrier algérien* on November 1, 1958: "We adhere to the ICFTU, yes, but the free labor movement is not an iron curtain for us." Asking what had become of the International's solidarity, the answer was "absolutely nothing." Support would thus also be sought elsewhere, for Algerians "don't have the right to refuse aid," no matter its provenance.[76] The Soviet Bloc, for its part, had already stepped up its efforts to gain allies in the nascent "Third World." Some Communist states, notably East Germany, hoped that support for anticolonial movements would bolster their own diplomatic legitimacy and standing.[77] By the end of 1958, Communist-Bloc aid had consequently become the UGTA's single most significant source of international relief. East Germany's Free Federation of Trade Unions alone was estimated by French intelligence to have donated the equivalent of 800,000 marks in aid to Algerian refugees.[78] At a meeting in September 1958 of the Egyptian-sponsored International Trade Union Committee for the Support of Algeria, the ICFTU allegedly pledged to extend its support though a monthly donation of goods worth 20,000 marks.[79] Reporting on a visit to refugee camps in Tunisia in October 1959, Irving Brown could only confirm these estimates. "I saw all sorts of articles coming from East European countries and the USSR," he wrote, and "the goods received included food, machinery, autos, clothes, beds, medical supplies and even complete equipment for a small clinic." By contrast, the supplies donated by the ICFTU and its affiliates "somehow or other . . . [do] not seem to be in evidence."[80]

Western labor leaders went into particularly high alert when, in 1959, the UGTA decided not only to accept Soviet-Bloc material gifts but also to send some of its members to trade union courses in East Germany, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. To Oldenbroek, the Algerians' association with Communist-Bloc trade unions represented a clear violation of the ICFTU's policy, and he informed the UGTA's general-secretary accordingly.[81] Instead of retracting the decision, however, the

Algerian union responded with a declaration of independence and neutrality, informing Oldenbroek that while they understood the ICFTU's concern, the UGTA had such a need "to train the greatest possible number of leaders," that it wanted "to take advantage of all the possibilities, all the more so as we are sure of the feelings of militant comrades, who are sufficiently informed about the aims and policy of the WFTU."[82]

To Meany and Brown, the UGTA's blatant refusal to toe the International's line was disappointing, but to some extent at least understandable. For one, it was undeniable that WFTU affiliates were doing more to support the Algerians materially than their Western counterparts. For another, many of the center's current leaders were not experienced trade union leaders but political appointees. Finally, the UGTA's neutralism was also the product of a rising antagonism felt by many African nationalists for all the institutions associated with the countries that were now, or had previously been, associated with colonialism.[83] After all, just as Western governments refused to condemn France over its policies in Algeria—even allowing the French army to make use of NATO-supplied military equipment—so, too, the ICFTU refused to censure the *Force Ouvrière*. Following Brown's visit to Tunisia and notwithstanding his disillusionment with the UGTA, he once again urged both the AFL-CIO and the labor International to augment their financial and material assistance to the Algerian union center. "Whatever help we have given to the struggle now," he vowed, "will contribute to our building solid relationships with the future UGTA leadership in Algeria." In the struggle over "honest-to-goodness" trade unionism, so Brown hoped, it was not yet too late to reverse the UGTA's trend toward neutralism and socialism.[84]

Brown's warnings produced mixed results. On the one hand, the AFL-CIO remained reticent to support the Algerians unilaterally. On the other, the ICFTU did step up its aid to the UGTA. In 1960, the International Solidarity Fund allocated just over $83,000 to the Algerian cause.[85] Some of that money covered legal payments in ongoing cases against trade unionists as well as rehabilitation costs. Some paid for the provision of mobile clinics to be deployed in refugee camps. The vast majority, however, went toward schooling and vocational training schemes for refugees in Morocco and Tunisia as well as courses on trade unionism.[86]

This emphasis on education reflected the International's growing preoccupation with Algeria's future, a question that became more and more pressing as Algeria's independence became a reality. By November 1961, while French and Algerian political leaders negotiated the terms of a permanent settlement at Evian, the UGTA launched a series of urgent appeals for further help. The Algerian war, one plea read,

> has played havoc with the mass of the workers, youth and more particularly children, in depriving these last of the means of education and training.
>
> It is therefore incumbent upon our organization to watch over this human capital, to tackle this important problem which is the key not only to the economic and social liberation of our country, but also of each worker.[87]

Appeals for aid became even more desperate after the ratification of the Evian accords and Algeria's formal accession to independence in July 1962.[88] In the context of a

bitter power struggle within the National Liberation Front, a growing exodus of *colons*, and a vindictive scorched earth campaign by European reactionaries of the *Organisation de l'Armée Secrète,* the UGTA's tasks appeared daunting. The center not only had to reorganize the structure and administration of the trade union movement in Algeria, but it also had to help reestablish a war-torn economy. To accomplish these tasks, the UGTA required skilled leaders, technicians, and, above all, capital. The ICFTU finally appealed directly to its affiliates to do what they could to supplement the Solidarity Fund's means.[89] For the first time, moreover, individual affiliates such as the AFL-CIO and the West German Confederation instigated their own nation-wide fundraising campaigns.[90]

The aims of these initiatives, however, were more political than humanitarian, for they aimed to counteract the influence of those elements within the UGTA who championed the implementation of Socialist policies in postindependence Algeria, including nationalization of industry and extensive land reform. As one statement issued by the AFL-CIO makes clear:

> Unless . . . [the] free trade unionists [of the UGTA] fill the vacuum that can develop in these immediate post-independence days, it is clear that the enemies of Democracy will be lurking in the wings in order to take over. . . . We of the AFL-CIO . . . want to pledge to our Algerian brothers that they shall not lose this final battle for political and economic independence because of a lack of material means.[91]

A Wasted Effort?

To the very end, therefore, the focus of the ICFTU's various measures of assistance to the UGTA focused primarily on one goal: To ensure the development of a free, autonomous Algerian trade union movement and, in so doing, keep Algeria within the Western camp. This had certainly been Brown's intention and hope from the start; he had even wagered on his ability to secure that goal. On this occasion, however, Brown—to his great disappointment—would lose his bet, and Lacoste was proved right. In September 1962, after months of internal upheaval, Algeria, under the auspices of Ahmed Ben Bella, declared itself a neutral and democratic people's republic. Whatever autonomy the UGTA once enjoyed it now lost as the country was transformed into a one-party state. By the time of the center's first national congress in January 1963, Algeria's trade unions were brought firmly under state control; trade unionists who opposed these developments were replaced by party functionaries who were chosen more for their willingness to toe the party line than their knowledge of trade unionism. By 1964, the Algerian center had severed its ties to the ICFTU.[92]

In light of these developments, were the International's efforts on behalf of Algerian trade unions, and Brown's in particular, just a futile waste of time? The Ben Bella government justified its suppression of free trade unionism as a logical and necessary step in the development of a specifically Algerian brand of socialism, one that celebrated the peasant and unskilled laborer—Frantz Fanon's *Lumpenproletariat*—as the spearhead of the Algerian revolution. Thus, notwithstanding the suppression of all normal trade union activity and persecution of Algerian trade union leaders during the war years, trade unionists came to be depicted as a "labor aristocracy" that had benefited from the colonial regime.[93]

Yet just because the meta-narrative of Algerian decolonization has relegated the UGTA to the ranks of an ineffective subordinate does not mean we should ignore its achievements during the war for independence, or those of the free world's labor movement on Algeria's behalf. After all, between 1956 and 1962, the UGTA did act as a vital adjunct to the National Liberation Front. Without Brown's insistence on the UGTA's affiliation to the ICFTU, that movement would have found it much more difficult to break out of its isolated, underground existence. Membership in the labor International enabled Algerian nationalists to engage openly and legitimately in international trade union activities, in humanitarian relief work, and most importantly, in the "foreign policy of national liberation" that became so important to Algeria's ultimate victory against French colonialism. Playing the West off against the East proved an effective, if unpopular, strategy for garnering moral and material support. The ICFTU's most important contribution to the UGTA, however, was not always appreciated by members of the UGTA, largely because of its symbolic and psychological nature: Namely, the moral recognition by over 55 million workers in over 91 countries of Algeria's right to exist as a free and independent nation. Such a bequest might be difficult to quantify, yet its effects were undeniable. If nothing else, it helped to sustain the Algerians' determination to fight for their national liberation. Little wonder, therefore, that Lacoste considered Brown—the man who galvanized the labor International into action—the "master corrupter" of French North Africa.

Notes

1. Excerpts of speech by Lacoste before French Republican Council, May 29, 1956, reproduced in Telegram from State Department to US embassy, Brussels, May 31, 1956, National Archives and Records Administration (henceforth, NARA), College Park, MD, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
2. Annie Lacroix-Riz, *Les protectorats d'Afrique du Nord entre la France et Washington, du débarquement à l'indépendance. Maroc et Tunisie 1942–1956* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1988), 83–86, 147–152, 218–223; Egya N. Sangmuah, "Interest Groups and Decolonization: American Businessmen and Organized Labour in French North Africa, 1948–56," *Maghreb Review* 13 (1988).
3. "Algeria: Harassed on All Sides," *Time*, May 21, 1956. In 1957, the FTUC was replaced by an International Affairs Committee merging AFL and CIO staff.
4. "Labor: The Most Dangerous Man," *Time*, March 17, 1952; "Comme l'Américain bien tranquille du roman de Graham Greene, Irving Brown, avec une imperturbable bonne foi, mène une activité néfaste," *Aux Écoutes* (Paris), May 10, 1956; "Syndicalisme de salon," *Dimanche Matin* (Paris), March 25, 1956; Despatch from Theodore Achilles, US Embassy Paris to US Consul, Algiers, May 3, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560. For a biography of Brown, see Ben Rathbun, *The Point Man: Irving Brown and the Deadly Post-1945 Struggle for Europe and Africa* (London: Minerva Press, 1996).
5. On the connections between the AFL and the CIA, see Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998); Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone, Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spymaster* (New York: Random House, 1999); George Morris, *CIA and American Labor: The Subversion of the AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy* (New York: International Publishers, 1967); Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *In the Interest of Democracy:*

The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011); Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), chap.3.

6. Boston Committee on Foreign Relations, Summary of Meeting, January 19, 1953, NARA, CREST, approved for release 1999/09/10, CIA-RDP83–00423R000200530001–0.
7. On Italy and France, see Stephen Burwood, *American Labor, France, and the Politics of Intervention, 1945–1952* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998); Roy Godson, *American Labor and European politics: The AFL As a Transnational Force* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976); Annie Lacroix-Riz, "Autour d'Irving Brown: L'A.F.L., le Free Trade Union Committee, le Département d'Etat et la scission syndicale française," *Le Mouvement Social* 151 (1990); Ronald L. Filippelli, *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943–1953: A Study of Cold War Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989); Irwin M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945–1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 96–113; Federico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951.* Trans. Harvey Fergusson, II (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992). On the ICFTU, see Carew, "The Schism within the World Federation of Trade Unions: Government and Trade-Union Diplomacy," *International Review of Social History* 29 (1984); Denis MacShane, *International Labour and the Origins of the Cold War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Peter Weiler, "The United States, International Labor, and the Cold War: The Breakup of the World Federation of Trade Unions," *Diplomatic History* 5 (1981).
8. Echoing Lacoste's accusations, one British Cabinet paper accused American labor "of tak[ing] advantage of the difficult situation in which the UK and other European [colonial] powers find themselves and to replace their influence and interests by direct US penetration in Africa using the machinery of ICFTU and American contacts that have been built up with African leaders for this purpose." See Annexe to Cabinet paper on policy in Africa, December 21, 1959, George Meany Memorial Archives (henceforth, GMMA), Silver Spring, MD, RG1/027, Box 51, File 23. See also Anthony Carew, "Conflict within the ICFTU: Anti-Communism and Anti-Colonialism in the 1950s," *International Review of Social History* 41 (1996); John C. Stoner, "Anti-Communism, Anti-Colonialism, and African Labor: The AFL-CIO in Africa, 1955–1975" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2001); Stephen Rabe, *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Wilford, chap.5.
9. France relinquished its protectorates in Tunisia and Morocco on March 20 and April 7, 1956, respectively.
10. Cited in Irwin M. Wall, *France, The United States, and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 22.
11. Statement issued by Lacoste's office on May 8, 1956, cited in "A.F.L.-C.I.O. Aide Barred in Algeria; Activities in World Labor Group Cited," *New York Times,* May 9, 1956.
12. The only existing studies are university theses: Judith France, "AFL-CIO Foreign Policy: An Algerian Example, 1954–1962" (PhD diss., Ball State University, 1982); Chad L. Fitzloff, "The limits of American labor's influence on the Cold War free labor movement: A case study of Irving Brown and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Tunisia and Algeria," (MA thesis, Kansas State University, 2010).
13. Jean Meynaud and Anisse Salah Bey, *Trade Unionism in Africa: A Study of its Growth and Orientation*. Trans. Angela Brench (London: Methuen, 1967), 2.
14. The most thorough accounts of the role of labor movements in African decolonization are by Frederick Cooper. See his *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California

Press, 2005); "The Dialectics of Decolonization: Nationalism and Labor Movements in Postwar French Africa," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds., Frederick Cooper and Ann Stoler (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997). See also Albert Ayache, *Le Mouvement syndical au Maroc*, vol. 3 (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1982–1993); Abdesslem Ben Hamida, *Le syndicalisme tunisien de la deuxième guerre mondiale à l'autonomie interne* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1989); Fouad Benseddik, *Syndicalisme et politique au Maroc* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990); Mustapha Kraïem, *La classe ouvrière tunisienne et la lutte de libération nationale (1939–1952)* (Tunis: n.p., 1980); Werner Plum, *Gewerkschaften im Maghreb: UGTT, UMT, UGTA* (Hannover, German Federal Republic: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1962); Gérard Fonteneau, et al., *Histoire du syndicalisme en Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2004).

15. Boualem Bourouïba, *Les syndicalistes algériens: leur combat de l'éveil à la libération* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 33; Plum, 13.
16. Out of a total population of 9,144,971 in 1954, 979,969 were of European (including Jewish) origin and 8,165,002 were Muslim. Of these, approximately 350,000 Europeans and 3,150,000 Algerians were deemed economically active and gainfully employed whereas a further 1,000,000—predominantly Algerian—were deemed under- or unemployed. The trade union movement in Algeria had approximately 350,000 members overall. See International Labour Organization, ed., *Labour Survey of North Africa* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1960), 21, 94–95, 152, 448–449.
17. This development occurred on either side of the Mediterranean; in fact, migrant workers in the metropole were admitted into the CGT over a decade before their comrades in North Africa. See Benjamin Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie: l'immigration algérienne en France 1912–1992* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 24–26, 39–42.
18. Reliable statistics are hard to come by since the CGT recorded membership for the whole of North Africa. Former *cégétiste* (the term used for CGT members) militant Lakhdar Kaïdi estimated that the confederation reached its peak recruitment in Algeria during 1946–1947 with approximately 250,000 to 300,000 members, with numbers averaging at about 100,000 thenceforth. See Meynaud and Salah Bey, 68–69; Bourouïba, 83; Plum, 15.
19. Ordre du jour voté par la section socialiste (Section française de l'Internationale communiste), April 22, 1921, cited in Charles-Robert Ageron, *Politiques coloniales au Maghreb* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1972), 181 (author's translation).
20. Nora Benallègue-Chaouia, *Algérie: Mouvement ouvrier et question nationale, 1919–1954* (Alger, Algeria: Office des publications universitaires, 2005), 345–369; Bourouïba, 145–168; Mohamed Farès, *Aïssat Idir: Documents et témoignages sur le syndicalisme algérien* (Alger, Algeria: Zyriab editions, 2009), 86–90.
21. Meynaud and Salah Bey, 67–73.
22. According to Werner Plum, the UGSA shrunk by 75 percent, to 15,000 members, in early 1956, all of whom were European. See Plum, 15.
23. Abdesslem Ben Hamida, "Le rôle du syndicalisme tunisien dans le mouvement de libération nationale (1946–1956)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 117–118 (1981); Kenneth J. Perkins, *A History of Modern Tunisia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), chap. 4; Béchir Tlili, "Des rapports entre le Parti libéral et constitutionnaliste tunisien et la Confédération générale tunisienne du travail," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 113–114 (1980).
24. Farès, 86 (author's translation).
25. Mohammed Harbi, *Le F.L.N. Mirage et Réalité: Des origines à la prise du pouvoir 1945–1962* (Paris: Editions J.A., 1985), 140; Bourouïba, 86–108.
26. Seventy-two trade unions joined the UGTA, of which those for railway, postal, port, construction, and agricultural workers were the first. See ILO, *Labour Survey,* 151; Plum, 33–34; François Weiss, *Doctrine et action syndicale en Algérie* (Paris: Éditions Cujas, 1970), 30–31.

27. On Aïssat Idir, see Farès; Hassan Aïssat, *Aïssat Idir: Sa lutte politique et syndicale pour l'indépendance de l'Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006).
28. *L'Ouvrier algérien,* April 6, 1956, cited in Farès, *Aïssat,* 114 (author's translation).
29. Roure's article was published on March 1 in the Belgian newspaper *Dernière Heure* and is cited in Annual Labor Report for 1956 by US Vice Consul Alfred Johnson, Algiers, November 20, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
30. Gilbert Meynier, *Histoire intérieure du FLN* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 522–529.
31. Schreiben Nr.8680/56, Botschaftsrat Jansen, Paris, an das Auswärtige Amt (AA), March 5, 1956, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts (henceforth, PA/AA), Berlin, B25/7 (author's translation).
32. Annual Labor Report for 1956.
33. Meynier, 523.
34. "Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: the Grant Strategy of the Algerian War of Independence," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 223. See also Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
35. Despatch from US Embassy, Brussels, to State Department, March 28, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
36. Notwithstanding the political rivalry between "Messalists" and "Frontists," Algerian trade unionists initially considered creating a joint federation; it was only in February 1956 that these efforts were finally abandoned and two separate organizations were created. See Bourouïba, 188–194.
37. Ibid., 191–2.
38. ICFTU Constitution and Congress Standing Orders, 4th World Congress, Vienna, May 20–28, 1955, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 12.
39. Both factions clashed over the Algerian question at *Force Ouvrière*'s national congress at Amiens in May 1956, and although Bothereau and his supporters prevailed, the federation's policies regarding the Algerian war and Algerian trade unionism continued to be marred by hesitations and contradictions. See Schreiben Nr. 8337/56, Botschafter von Maltzan, Paris, an AA, March 16, 1956, PA/AA, B25/7; Schreiben Nr.2150/56, Botschafter von Maltzan, Paris, an AA, May 7, 1956, PA/AA, B24/273/F3; Unsigned report on "syndicalisme en Afrique du Nord," January 1956; Telegram, US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 8, 1956; Annual Labor Report for 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
40. For membership numbers, see ICFTU Report on the activities of the European Regional Organization, April 1—December 31, 1956, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 10; ICFTU Report on Activities, 1960–1962, and Financial Reports, 7th World Congress, Berlin, July 5–13, 1962, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 13.
41. Stora, *Ils venaient*, 224.
42. Letter from Meany to Irving Brown, March 29, 1956, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 22.
43. Report on ICFTU sub-committee meeting, April 9–11, 1956, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.
44. "Algerian Nationalist Unions: ICFTU and Irving Brown Activities," report by US Embassy, Paris, April 30, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
45. Despatch from Achilles to US Consul, Algiers, May 3, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560; telegram from US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 12, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
46. Telegram from US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 10, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
47. Telegram from US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 14, 1956; Telegram from US Consulate, Algiers, to State Department, May 17, 1956; Telegram from

US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 24, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.

48. Letter from Meany to Mollet, June 14, 1956, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 22.
49. It is difficult to establish the accuracy of Lacoste's accusations. At that time, the ICFTU almost certainly did not provide assistance to either the USTA or the UGTA. We do know, however, that Brown and other members of the FTUC had been in contact with North African, including Algerian, unionists and nationalists as early as 1950. Claims that Brown had offered 30 million French francs to the MTLD in June 1953 for the purpose of setting up a nationalist trade union federation remain unsubstantiated. See Letter from Oldenbroek to Meany, May 14, 1956, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 22; Memorandum of conversation between US labor attaché, Brussels, and Oldenbroek, May 18, 1956; Press statement by Brown, in telegram from US Embassy, Paris, to State Department, May 24, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560; Stora, 226; Rathbun, 282–291.
50. Annual Labor Report for 1956.
51. Bourouïba, chaps. 5–6; Meynier, 523–525.
52. Report on ICFTU Executive Board Meeting, July 2–7, 1956, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.
53. Ibid. Brown's mention of the Arab League referred to the recently created International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, a body inspired largely by the firebrand nationalism and neutralism of Nasserite Egypt. See Willard Beling, *Pan-Arabism and Labor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).
54. Plum, 36.
55. Annual Labor Report for 1956.
56. Translation of references to Algeria in Oldenbroek's speech to the General Union of Tunisian Workers, September 20, 1956, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 22; Despatch from US Embassy, Tunis, to State Department, September 23, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560.
57. "Union gives plan to win cold war," *New York Times,* May 31, 1950; Report by Brown, April 7, 1953, GMMA, RG18/004, Box 10, File 18.
58. Fitzloff, 80–86.
59. Morgan, 291–295.
60. For a summary of statements, appeals, and resolutions, at least for the years 1960 to 1962, see ICFTU Report on Activities, 1960–1962; France, chap. 4.
61. The strike, which began in Algiers on January 28, was timed to coincide with the UN General Assembly's debate on the Algerian question. See ILO, *Labour Survey*, 152; Bourouïba, 273–281.
62. These accusations largely came from the UGTA itself. See Lettre circulaire de l'UGTA, August 29, 1956, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 2, File 12; ICFTU Press Release, September 10, 1956, NARA, RG84, UD2016, Box 19, File 560; Report on ICFTU executive board meeting, November 26–30, 1956, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 4; Report on ICFTU sub-committee meeting, March 17–18, 1958; Continuation of Report on ICFTU executive board meeting, November 28, 1958, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.
63. Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, March 14–17, 1959, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 2, Box 68, File 3. For details of the trial and its aftermath, see Bourouïba, 324–331; Fares, 95–115.
64. French authorities first maintained that Aïssat Idir had committed suicide by setting fire to himself in the military detention center of Birtraria, a camp well known for its use of torture and role in "disappearances." They then claimed that his burns were the product of an accidental fire of his bedding (the result of falling asleep while smoking). Paul Delouvrier, resident-general at the time of the trial, would later suggest that

Aïssat's death had resulted from foul play, implying in an interview with *Le Monde* editor-in-chief Hubert Beuve-Méry that "le 'délit de fuite' est si simple et si expéditif." See Aïssat, 117–128; Yves Godard, *Les paras dans la ville* (Paris: Fayard, 1972), 291–294; Sylvie Thénault, *Une drôle de justice: les magistrats dans la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Ed. la Découverte, 2001), 196; Raphaëlle Branche, *La Torture et l'Armée pendant la guerre d'Algérie, 1954–1962* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 235.

65. News from the AFL-CIO, For Release in A. M. Papers, August 4, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 7. On the previous day, the UGTA had launched a renewed appeal for action. See L'UGTA accuse Delouvrier, August 3, 1959, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 2, Box 68, File 5.
66. Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, March 14–17, 1959; Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, October 1–2, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 14.
67. Åke Wedin, *International Trade Union Solidarity: ICFTU 1957–1965* (Stockholm: Prisma, 1974), 11.
68. Appel par l'UGTA à la CISL, January 1, 1957, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 1, Box 4, File 9 (author's translation).
69. Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, October 1–2, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 14.
70. ICFTU memorandum to all affiliates on the International Solidarity Fund, March 4, 1957, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 10. It is interesting that Algeria was the only territory to be singled out.
71. Cited in Fitzloff, 94–95, 63.
72. Report on visit to Tunis, February 24, 1958, GMMA, RG18/004, Box 11, File 14.
73. Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, March 17–18, 1958, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6. By March 1958, the International Committee of the Red Cross had registered 123,000 Algerian refugees in Tunisia, and another 50,000 in Morocco. The numbers would rise further. See UGTA, *Mémoire sur la guerre d'Algérie et la répression qui frappe les travailleurs, les syndicalistes et leurs familles* (Tunis: n.p., 1959); International Committee of the Red Cross, *The ICRC and the Algerian Conflict* (Geneva: n.p., 1962).
74. Minutes of ISF committee meeting, March 16, 1959, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 50, File 4; Fitzloff, 99.
75. Continuation of a report on ICFTU executive board meeting, November 27, 1958, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.
76. Cited in Weiss, 39 (author's translation).
77. Jerry F. Hough, *The Struggle for the Third World: Soviet Debates and American Options* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1986); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Fritz Taubert, *La guerre d'Algérie et la République Démocratique Allemande: le rôle de l' «autre» Allemagne pendant les «événements»* (Dijon: Ed. universitaire de Dijon, 2010), 37–38.
78. Notice no. 11542 du Service de documentation extérieure et de contre-espionnage (SDECE), August 2, 1958; Notice no. 15134, SDECE, February 19, 1959; Service Historique de la Défence, Terre (SHD-T), Vincennes, 10T/530/D1.
79. Report on International Trade Union Committee for the Support of Algeria Meeting, September 12, 1958, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 1, Box 4, File 10.
80. Memorandum on Meetings with UGTA in Tunis, October 20, 1959, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 50, File 5.
81. On these debates, see Continuation of a report on ICFTU executive board meeting, November 27, 1958; Report on ICFTU subcommittee meeting, October 1–2, 1959; Letter from Oldenbroek to Abdelkader Maachou, September 14, 1959; Additional

report on ICFTU sub-committee meeting, October 1–2, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.

82. Letter from Ramdane Dekkar to Oldenbroek, September 26, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 6.
83. Letter from Meany to Oldenbroek, January 9, 1959, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 7; Letter from Brown to Lovestone, February 11, 1959, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 1, Box 12, File 15; Letters from Brown to Ross, October 19 and 21, 1959, GMMA, RG18/04, Series 2, Box 7, File 19.
84. Memorandum on meetings with UGTA in Tunis, October 20, 1959.
85. Judith France speculates, and Matthew Connelly asserts, that this increase in funding resulted from a covert infusion of funds by the Central Intelligence Agency. This intimation has yet to be confirmed. After all, relations between the CIA and the FTUC cooled down considerably after 1953, with the CIA wanting more transparency over the ways in which American unionists spent their money, and American unionists resenting the CIA's efforts to direct their activities. See France, 104; Connelly, 58–59; Wilford, 62–69; Morgan, chaps. 12–13.
86. ISF table of income and expenditure in 1960, GMMA, RG1/027, Box 51, File 21; Rapport sur le projet de budget relative aux réfugiés algériens pour 1960, January 8, 1960, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 2, File 14. The figures provided do not include individual donations made by affiliates.
87. Appeal by UGTA to ICFTU and affiliates, November 9, 1961, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 8.
88. Schreiben, UGTA, an Richter, April 18, 1962, Archiv der sozialen Demokratie (AdsD), Bonn, DGB-Bundesvorstand, 5/DGAJ/207.
89. Circular to affiliates, December 4, 1961, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 8; ICFTU circular to affiliates, April 9, 1962, AdsD, DGB-Bundesvorstand, 5/DGAJ/207; Report on mission to Algeria, ICFTU world congress, Berlin, July 5–13, 1962, GMMA, RG18/004, Series 2, Box 23, File 13.
90. Appeal by New York City Central Labor Council to affiliates, May 25, 1962, GMMA, RG1/038, Series 4, Sub-Series 2, Box 67, File 2; Protokoll, 28. Sitzung des Bundesvorstandes, Punkt 11, May 8–10, 1962; Richter an Hauptvorstände, August 9, 1962, AdsD, DGB-Bundesvorstand, 5/DGAJ/207.
91. Appeal to AFL-CIO members, undated, GMMA, RG18/003, Series 2, Box 68, File 5.
92. Meynier, 527–529; Weiss, 69–92.
93. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth.* Trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 73–77. On Algeria's postindependence economic policies, see Mahfoud Bennoune, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria, 1830–1987,* 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 89–217.

Chapter Thirteen

"We Will Follow a Nationalist Policy; but We Will Never Be Neutral"[1]: American Labor and Neutralism in Cold War Africa, 1957–1962

John C. Stoner

As African colonies began to move toward independence, external nongovernmental organizations attempted to guide certain aspects of those transitions. Of greatest interest to Western trade unions was ensuring the primacy of "free" trade union principles, that is, unionism that rejected the influence of governing political parties or external ideologies such as communism. Anti-Communist labor leaders from Europe and the United States (some of whom had been attempting to guide union development even during the African colonial period) encountered significant challenges in adapting their models of industrial relations and negotiations to African environments. Many African economies remained predominantly agricultural, and African unionists were overwhelmingly young and largely inexperienced. Their unions faced almost insurmountable barriers ranging from virtually nonexistent financial resources to the perils of participating in crafting labor relations machinery that would simultaneously permit rapid economic development while protecting workers' rights.

Driven by a desire to help, but profoundly influenced by their own preconceptions and political and labor cultures, Western unionists came to Africa in droves beginning in the mid-to-late 1950s. Those from the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) sought to capitalize on the mythos of American anticolonialism to gain a foothold in Africa at the expense of European unions such as the British Trades Union Congress (TUC) and French General Confederation of Labor (CGT), which had been present (and in some cases complicit with the colonial apparatus) during the colonial period.

These American unionists brought with them experience in organizing, a wealth of experience in negotiating with employers, and, perhaps most importantly, a Cold War perspective predisposed to be suspicious of anything that smacked of communism. They ran into hostile employers, hostile governments (particularly in the case of colonies that had yet to reach independence), and the chaotic nature of labor

relations in most places in Africa during this period. Few of these organizers were ready for the desperate need for so many of the things that they had come to take for granted in the United States. While they argued the finer points of alleged labor neocolonialism by East or West, African workers starved for almost everything (except passion) that allowed labor bureaucracies in the West to exist. American unionists also ran up against ardent nationalism, which proved to be a stumbling block in liberal assumptions about how trade unions should operate.

Directly connected to the imperatives of nationalism and development was one that indicated a desire on the part of many Africans to remain aloof from the more sordid aspects of Cold War allegiances. In African politics during the decolonization era (at least for those countries receiving independence in the years from 1957 to 1965), few words had as many varied meanings as neutralism. Outside observers rarely granted neutralism its due; while recognizing that new African countries (and their leaders) felt intense pressure to speed up modernization and development, they never saw neutralism as neutral. Instead, as recently cited by Russian historian Sergey Mazov, American diplomats perceived neutralism as either "against us" or "for us."[2]

American labor officials, especially those in charge of devising labor's foreign policy in Africa, were no different. They attempted to discern if neutralism, to which many African labor and political leaders professed to subscribe during this period, was in fact for or against them and, by extension, for or against "free" trade unionism, which was itself a politicized term and a product of Cold War polarization. While they did not always interpret African developments in the same way as American diplomats, ALL American labor officials viewed the events through Cold War colored glasses to some degree. As Yevette Richards has so ably shown, it was the degree that mattered.[3] Notable black unionists such as A. Philip Randolph, Maida Springer Kemp, and George McCray betrayed great sympathy for pan-African and national aspirations while still maintaining solid anti-Communist credentials. Irving Brown, who was largely responsible for shifting the gaze of the AFL-CIO toward Africa, at times displayed a higher degree of sensitivity to changes in Africa than Cold War rhetoric normally allowed. An analysis of American labor's responses to neutralism in the late 1950s and early 1960s confirms, on the one hand, the at-times overwhelming Cold War focus of the Federation. On the other hand, however, numerous examples exist in which those in the AFL-CIO correctly perceived that many Africans used neutralism pragmatically in order to secure the support they desperately needed to achieve their hoped-for goals and had little, if any, intention of becoming ideological lapdogs of either East or West.

The AFL-CIO's international affairs chief, Jay Lovestone, had learned Cold War cynicism the hard way through his own expulsion from the Communist Party USA. It always tinged his responses to neutralism, with his acolytes and supporters in the American labor movement often taking similar positions. Implicitly recognizing that neutralism was not one undifferentiated whole, Lovestone's greatest concern was a neutralism that masked pro-Soviet or pro-Chinese sympathies. In this camp, he placed all those connected to Jawaharlal Nehru's India and what would become more broadly the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961. Lovestone's

suspicions about Nehru influenced his interpretations (as well as those of Irving Brown) of many Cold War confrontations, including the 1956 Suez Canal crisis. Brown castigated the British and French for being largely responsible, but argued that the Soviets "stand to gain no matter what the outcome is." He further characterized Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser as a Soviet "marionette." Brown's frustration came from his belief that it was a legacy of heavy-handed colonialism that had opened the door to Communist intrigue; he noted somewhat sadly, "Here once again it has been proven that the colonial question is the key to the problem and that the Middle East is the immediate battlefield. I am also sure that Nehru and Tito and especially Mr. Menon know more than they are actually revealing."[4] Brown's and Lovestone's skepticism toward the Afro-Asian neutralism championed at the Bandung Conference and beyond would continue unabated over the next ten years.

As Lovestone was largely responsible for the AFL's foreign policy prior to the merger with the CIO in 1955 (and still very influential thereafter), his personal animosity toward anything that smacked of Eastern manipulation resulted in less-than-temperate policy positions. Some of his statements caused problems with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), of which the AFL had been a founding member. Given the AFL's strident anticommunism, "neutralism was anathema" and the Federation's stance often ruffled feathers on both sides of the Atlantic; earlier analysts of US labor's Cold War policy argued that the AFL's counterparts in the CIO were more "tolerant of the desire of these nations to concentrate their energies on solving the current problems of their own development."[5]

One such example came in the long-standing feud between Charles Millard, who became the ICFTU's Director of Organization in 1956, and Meany and Lovestone. Millard was a compromise candidate for the post, which was to bolster the ICFTU's insistence on ending affiliates' independent activities (especially those of the AFL-CIO) in foreign countries and centralizing all such activities through the secretariat in Brussels.[6] Millard claimed that he had only sought the position to frustrate the possibility that Brown or another like him would be chosen. Millard saw Lovestone's influence as ever present and something against which the ICFTU needed to continue to struggle; this included opposing AFL screeds against neutralism. Millard cited a recent attack by Meany on Nehru, telling ICFTU general-secretary J. H. Oldenbroek that "I also wanted you to know that I regarded Meany's statement about Nehru and Tito (especially Nehru) as untimely, unwise and untrue. . . . I hope the Committee will decide to make it plain that Meany was not speaking for Canadaian labour when he was parroting what I believe is the corrupt Lovestone line."[7] The seesaw battle between the two camps would continue until an open break occurred in 1969 and the AFL-CIO withdrew from the ICFTU.

Not everyone in US labor viewed neutralism with such a jaundiced eye. Walter Reuther stood in marked contrast to the Lovestone-Meany line, at least in regard to leaving open the possibility of supporting countries that wore the neutralist mantle. His trip to India in 1956 seemed to highlight the differences between an AFL policy, which often seemed to reduce nonalignment or neutralism to a

caricaturish ploy by the East to win the support of newly independent peoples, and a CIO policy, which was at least open to sending aid from labor and government in the United States to "all free Third World countries, not just those that were aligned to the USA."[8]

The AFL-CIO and African Neutralism

Irving Brown had been an early convert to thinking that Africa would loom large as decolonization occurred. By 1957, Lovestone was also on board; displaying the militarized language of a true Cold Warrior, he told George Meany that "Africa has become the real battleground and the next field of the big test of strength—not only for the free world and the Communist world but for our own country and our Allies who are colonialist powers."[9] In one sentence, Lovestone defined what would be one of the principal problems facing American policy in Africa for the next two decades: How to reassure Africans of American anticolonialist bona fides without unduly alienating America's European allies?

The first great hope for independent Africa came in the form of Kwame Nkrumah, the Ghanaian political leader who led Ghana from its independence in 1957 until a military junta removed him from power in a coup in 1966. In almost a decade of rule, Nkrumah went from being the widely hailed hope for uniting Africa to an autocratic dictator decried by the West for being in thrall to the Soviets and/or Chinese. At least initially, however, Ghana had a strong economy and an existing, if fragmented, trade union structure dominated by several powerful unions. It was an obvious choice for assistance from the US government and the US labor movement, both of which hoped that Ghana would be a regional, pro-Western anchor.

It was probably lucky for American prestige that Lovestone operated behind the scenes and was not the public face of the AFL-CIO's African policy; his blunt rhetoric and often uncompromising attitude would have won him few friends. Instead, there were three people who operated in Africa during this period. Each brought to the table different sensibilities and different agendas, each earned legitimacy in his or her own way, and each ultimately understood that labor's efforts in Africa could not be boiled down to Cold War binaries. This allowed the US labor movement to win some friends that the European-led ICFTU could not and it allowed them to keep some others even after the countries involved had alienated Western sensibilities. Their ability to navigate the difficult terrain created by East–West rivalries, charges of neocolonialism, ICFTU intrigue, and domestic pressure from the AFL-CIO was a testament to their commitment to the developing labor movement on the continent.

The first of these, Irving Brown, needs little introduction, although only a hagiographic biography attempts to cover his entire career in the labor movement.[10] Brown was Lovestone's right-hand man and engaged in overt and covert lobbying of labor movements in Europe in the immediate post-World War II period. By the mid-1950s, he had become quite interested in Africa and would spend large amounts of time there over the succeeding decade.

Maida Springer Kemp, the second of these, was a well-known figure in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in New York City prior to going to Africa on behalf of the AFL-CIO. Her career has received due attention in the form of two books, one of which contains a lengthy oral history conducted by Yevette Richards. Richards has shown that Springer navigated the difficulties of being a black woman (and later union official) in a largely white-dominated industry. She also became the most visible face of the American labor movement in East Africa during this period.[11]

Of these three, the least well known is George Francis McCray, who, like Springer, felt the influence of the Garvey movement in his youth. During the 1930s, he joined the Chicago branch of the National Negro Congress, but left that organization around 1940 when it appeared that Communist members tried to gain control. During the war, McCray investigated conditions at defense plants for the government. His son, Christophe, remembered that his father was one of the few in the neighborhood who stayed home during the war.[12]

By the mid-1950s, McCray helped to found, in addition to serving as its president, Local 1006 of the Government and Civic Employees Organizing Committee-CIO, which eventually amalgamated with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees. His interests in Africa and his friendship with Roosevelt University sociologist St. Clair Drake, who taught at the University of Ghana in this period, made the Continent an obvious choice for McCray's labor outreach.[13]

As African Americans, Springer and McCray were desirable choices for labor missionaries. Each spent varying periods of time in Africa and the United States working on African issues; McCray remained in Africa for much of the rest of his life. Both lost spouses because of their labor activism and itinerancy.[14] Neither had the status to dictate labor's African policy, yet they were most often the interpreters of that policy on the ground and each was responsible for enduring efforts to train black workers. In addition to Irving Brown, they also provided much of the intelligence that helped shape the AFL-CIO's African policy.

Given their sympathies for pan-Africanism, both McCray and Springer viewed Nkrumah's fledgling Ghana with anticipation; they characterized pan-Africanism and neutralism not as either/or dichotomies, but saw each as a spectrum along which their ostensible allies strayed too far. While neither condoned those excesses, they understood them.[15] McCray traveled around Ghana, advising unions and reporting back regularly to his own union president, Arnold Zander, to Drake, and to the AFL-CIO. The American embassy, although concerned about McCray's pan-African sympathies, found him likable and, more important, effective. It approved his request for a two-month extension and said patronizingly that McCray was now "aware of his proper role in Ghana." They added that he had "generally sound opinions on trade union matters."[16] His visit went so well that McCray was granted at least one extension and remained in Ghana for more than six months. He traveled the country, gave talks, distributed literature, and assisted Ghanaian workers with the development of educational programs. He noted that his efforts had resulted in the US embassy "asking me to take it easy."[17]

Both Springer and McCray saw independence as a unique moment when the United States could capitalize on its own anticolonial past and forge strong bonds in West and East Africa. McCray argued that the demand for programs like the short-lived African Trade Union Scholarship Program came from Africans themselves. Like many others, he repeated that "Africans have lost or are fast losing all faith and trust in the colonial powers and the unions which express the interests of these powers."[18] McCray believed that it was African nationalism rather than neutralism or any seeming inclination toward one Cold War side or the other that was the key to creating and sustaining an effective relationship with fledgling African unions:

> Though we did not create the dangerous labor situation in Africa, there are two courses we can follow. The present course of pretending or hoping that ICFTU can satisfy rampant African nationalism deeply rooted in the labor movements, is inviting tragic failure. We can welcome the Africans into a close, fraternal union with us, as they desire, or we can hold them at arms length through ICFTU, and hope for the best.[19]

This belief motivated McCray through his subsequent work for the African Labor College, set up by the ICFTU in Kampala, Uganda, as well as his later work for the African American Labor Center.

One of the consequences of having been on the ground in Africa for activists such as McCray, Springer, and Irving Brown was that they could see (and at least occasionally sympathize with) the difficult position into which many African unionists had been placed. In the context of decolonization, it was neither reasonable nor realistic to expect that African unionists would eschew nationalist politics in the name of Western-style labor liberalism. Whether it was Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) leader John Tettegah moving in and out of the upper echelons of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party or Kenyan Federation of Labor head Tom Mboya jockeying for a position within Jomo Kenyatta's Kenya African National Union, African labor leaders rarely had the luxury of failing to toe the party line. Those unions that had more autonomy and power, such as the Mineworkers in Ghana, often found their autonomy jeopardized by rejecting efforts to integrate them more fully into nationalist labor schemes. This was the case in Ghana when the GTUC inaugurated its "New Structure" in 1957 and 1958: The unions representing three of the most industrialized sectors of the economy—railway workers, mineworkers, and the employees of the United Africa Company—faced the unenviable decision of acquiescing to more federation and government control or being legislated out of existence.[20]

George McCray's arguments about the relationship between nationalism and neutralism failed to sway Lovestone, who was much more skeptical about the potential for Communist subversion in places like Ghana and Guinea. Lovestone had been confident for some time that most neutralism was mere window dressing for Soviet penetration of the ICFTU and, by extension, the free labor movement more broadly. "As I see it," he wrote to Brown, "the strategy of the Russians is very clear:—What they want to do is on the basis of racialism and neutralism get

together the Asians and Africans and in this way chip away the Asian and African affiliates from the I.C.F.T.U. They will not ask each Asian-African affiliate of the I.C.F.T.U. to leave Brussels but what [*sic*] the Russians do want to have this Asian-African organization serve as a bridge for them into Brussels." He and Brown feared that the international labor movement could show no weakness in the face of the threat. Brown asserted that the ICFTU had to maintain a consistent line on neutralism. In November 1957, he urged the ICFTU Board not to have a double standard, saying "it was impossible to speak out of two sides of the mouth, namely to be against neutralism in Brussels and to be for it in Tokyo and New Delhi." Less than two weeks later, Lovestone expressed his concerns to Springer, writing that, only a few short months after independence:

> I am a bit disturbed as to the way Ghana is going. . . . I am much more disturbed by the game which is being played by Nkrumah and others, a game which is often played by newly-established independent governments. I refer to the game of flirting with Moscow, of signing trade treaties with them, of establishing diplomatic relations. All of this leads to neutralism a la Nehru and confusion worse confounded.[21]

The tension between Lovestone's harder line and the softer one championed by Springer and McCray continued into the 1960s.

The issue of neutralism had obvious implications for organizations such as the ICFTU, which had been created in response to the growth of leftist influence in the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). If African nations and/or their labor organizations took neutralism seriously, they would not permit affiliation with organizations that appeared to take sides in the Cold War. The question of affiliation thus became a barometer for the degree of neutralism practiced by a trade union center (or the government controlling it, as was increasingly the case in Ghana).

The issue of African affiliates had little to do with the ICFTU's often-shaky finances. Few of the newly independent countries contributed significantly to its coffers (the AFL-CIO was by far the single largest supporter of the organization). Instead, the issue was prestige, particularly given the ongoing contest with the WFTU. If African union groups chose a strictly neutralist position, the ICFTU faced a worst-case scenario in which it had no affiliates in all of Africa.

Neutralism was another issue that complicated the already-strained relationship between the ICFTU and AFL-CIO. Statements on neutralism would continue to be points of contention between AFL-CIO officials and their peers at the ICFTU. Charles Millard and A. Philip Randolph sparred over the question in correspondence in early 1958. In response to a critical comment by Millard, Randolph laid out his definition of neutralism and expressed concern that it was only very rarely actually neutral:

> [Y]our deduction that I equate neutralism with communism is far from correct. But let me hasten to add that neither do I equate neutralism with democracy. Ideological neutralism is an abstraction and is as far from the free world of democracy as it is from the slave world of communism. But operational, political neutralism can hardly be construed as having been, or now is, truly neutral. . . . Neutralism may be viewed

> as an intellectual formulation of a device of diplomacy and an international posture calculated to reduce the possibilities of a nation's involvement in war—cold or hot, and every nation has the right to choose or not to choose allies.[22]

As the struggle over affiliation continued, Lovestone continued to press his agents in Africa on the question.

Two important pan-African conferences in Ghana in 1958 tested the AFL-CIO's stance on pan-Africanism and neutralism. At the April Conference of Independent African States in Accra, Ghana, Nkrumah repeated what had become the Ghanaian buzzwords for his vision of Africa's future. In his opening speech, he reaffirmed his commitment to "positive non-alignment so as to enable us at any time to adopt measures which will best suit our national interests and promote the cause of peace. It is only by avoiding entanglement in quarrels of the Great Powers that we shall be able to assert our African Personality on the side of peace." This conference laid the groundwork for the All-African People's Conference, which would challenge the ICFTU and, at least implicitly, the West much more aggressively.

In marked contrast to the year that preceded it, by mid-1958, the ICFTU was in a somewhat better position vis-a-vis its African affiliates. It had mended fences with Kenyan Federation of Labor head Tom Mboya, who appeared mollified for the moment over perceived ICFTU slights to African union leaders; these included dismissive treatment when visiting Brussels, exclusion from important decisions such as those creating and funding the ICFTU's African Regional Organization (AFRO), and certain personnel decisions, which failed to account for African disillusion with some ICFTU staff in Africa.[23]

The ICFTU would not let the issue of neutralism lie, however. In what was perhaps a proactive effort to restate the organization's position on neutralism prior to the All-African Peoples' Conference, an ICFTU editorial denied being tied to the "apron strings of any power bloc" and claimed that those who remained outside the organization only played into the hands of the WFTU. It somewhat disingenuously purported not to doubt those who "sincerely came to the conclusion that trade union neutralism in the international field was a policy which best served the interests of their members," but noted that such a position was, in the ICFTU's eyes, "always a mistaken view."[24] More than a half century later, it is easy to see how African recipients of such messages (even among those who counted the ICFTU as allies) viewed them as patronizing further signs of the ICFTU's Cold War agenda.

At the All-African Peoples' Conference, delegates debated the desirability of creating a continental trade union organization separate from any of the three existing world federations.[25] Despite Lovestone's concerns that Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana was rapidly becoming a Soviet puppet, the head of the Ghana Trades Union Congress, John Kofi Tettegah, fought to frustrate the neutralist line espoused by Guinean unionists and others who wanted an independent body; Kenyan union officials Tom Mboya and Arthur Ochwada joined him in the effort. Both Maida Springer and Irving Brown noted the tireless activism of the three, Springer emphasizing that it was "ironic that the three men most

abused by the ICFTU were the ones to hold the line against disaffiliation." Irving Brown confirmed this analysis, saying that Tettegah and Mboya had provided a welcome note of moderation in contrast to the more strident calls for action. Despite these positive steps, Brown still saw the potential for a deteriorating situation; he described the conference proceedings as both "an opportunity and a danger to the free world."[26] In the end, delegates did call for the creation of an All-African Trade Union Federation (AATUF), although it would not come into existence for almost three years.

Over the next year, Ghana moved relatively quickly from being the ostensible friend of the West to one of its enemies. On the trade union front, the Ghana TUC withdrew from the ICFTU in 1959 as part of its advocacy for the AATUF. Tettegah also began to butt heads publicly with Mboya over the direction of the AATUF; Mboya claimed to support its general mission, but felt that the question of international affiliation needed to be left to national trade union centers to decide. This would continue to be the principal initial difference between the AATUF and the African Trade Union Confederation (ATUC), which was formed with the help of the ICFTU, to oppose it.[27]

Some dubbed 1960 the Year of Africa because it was a year in which 17 African colonies gained independence. Given the potential for turmoil during political transitions (and seeing how things could go from bad to worse in contexts like that of Congo), it is perhaps surprising that things went as well as they did. The battle lines had been drawn between the newly dubbed Ghana-Guinea bloc, which backed the creation of a nonaligned AATUF, and the AFL-CIO and ICFTU, which sought to keep African affiliates from defecting. Even as he appeared to embrace the Soviet Bloc, however, Kwame Nkrumah enjoyed a hero's welcome from African Americans in New York City when he went to address the United Nations General Assembly. When the State Department responded to Nkrumah's speech by labeling him a Communist, black newspapers castigated Secretary of State Christian Herter for his remarks.[28]

By 1960, American labor observers such as Irving Brown were more pragmatic about neutralism, recognizing that Cold War binaries failed to do justice to those who hoped to avoid entanglement in the Cold War intrigue. They recognized the need to do what they could where they could despite the highly charged political rhetoric of a nation like Ghana. As Brown put it to Lovestone:

> I think that this is not the time to sound off on the African situation. It is more important to do some work. Furthermore, I think the whole subject of neutralism, especially in Africa, has to be treated in much more serious fashion than merely labeling people in terms of two categories. . . . I certainly would have strong reservations if certain statements gave an impression of the AFL-CIO sitting in judgement on what the Africans are doing or should do. . . . Let us concentrate on trying to get the ICFTU to do the proper job or, if that isn't possible, let us see whether or not we can do something to assist in the evolution towards a democratic African labor movement.[29]

Lovestone, too, had softened somewhat on the neutralism issue, although his idea of acceptable neutralism required commitment to anticommunism. Referring to

President Dwight Eisenhower's meeting with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev at Camp David in 1959, Lovestone opined:

> [A]fter what Eisenhower did at Camp David, it is pretty hard to prevent the flow of sewage called neutralism. To me it is far more important to emphasize democracy and freedom and the workers and the peoples sharing in the benefits of modern economic development as opposed to totalitarianism and despotism and the situation behind the Iron Curtain where the workers are intensely exploited under the Communist yoke. I would much prefer an anti-Communist neutralist group in Africa than a group which calls on Khrushchev for military assistance and relies on blackmail.[30]

Lovestone was likely referring to Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, which had just gained its independence from Belgium.

Lovestone continued to have very little patience, however, for those whom he felt were soft on communism; this included both of the main political parties in the United States. A few weeks later, he reiterated that he believed Eisenhower's meeting with Khrushchev at Camp David represented a low point in American Cold War diplomacy. In a particularly intemperate (and overly simplistic) rant against the machinations of John Tettegah and the nascent All-African Trade Union Federation, he claimed, "If they are really sincere in rejecting western influence, they should stop using soap, getting industrial help and technical assistance. We have to find the opportunity of explaining that to them."[31] Lovestone rarely noted the double bind facing new African nations and their trade union movements—how to jumpstart national economies without compromising the integrity of trade unions, which were somehow completely free from any government interference.

Despite Lovestone's antipathy, neither Springer nor McCray was willing to write off Ghana yet, even in the face of signs that the Ghana Trade Union Congress had become another organ of the Nkrumah regime. Springer struggled to reconcile her sympathy for Ghana's pan-African agenda with its increasingly autocratic system. Yet, she persisted in believing that the United States still had solid connections to Ghana and might be able to maintain them. While sparring with GTUC head John Tettegah, Springer jokingly remarked, "that the only positively neutral people I knew were dead ones."[32]

McCray too felt that Ghana could still be salvaged. The fact that St. Clair Drake was there made that country an obvious choice for visits when McCray got time away from the Kampala Labor College, where he continued to teach for the ICFTU. McCray still believed that Nkrumah could be a great leader; he encouraged Drake to pass along information to the Ghanaian prime minister from time to time about political developments throughout the continent.[33]

As time passed, the debate over neutralism lost some of its urgency. Indeed, by the early 1960s, neutralism came to be seen as an established reality. As A. Philip Randolph had insisted to Charles Millard, however, the devil was in the details of how Africans used neutralism to achieve certain political or economic ends. Even the European powers had started to view neutralism "as not unfavorable," per Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs G. Mennen Williams.[34] According to one AFL-CIO observer, the ATUC, which the ICFTU supported as an answer to

the AATUF, had "adopted an honest line of neutralism rather than the favored [i.e., Eastern Bloc] double standard."[35] Even in Brussels by the mid-1960s, the ICFTU secretariat recognized the ubiquity of neutralism. As Pieter de Jonge informed ICFTU president Omer Becu after attending a conference on sanctions against South Africa, it was "as a contemporary and inescapable African phenomenon one has to live with it, without necessarily condoning it."[36]

Ironically, recent scholarship has suggested that the Soviet "penetration" of Africa resulted at best in a stillborn African socialism never recognized by Moscow as legitimate. Time after time, the United States and its allies bested the Soviets in the propaganda arena and Soviet trade arrangements with African countries often failed to bring the results desired by Africans in terms of economic growth or modernization.[37] Yet the threat of Soviet influence created political controversies both in the United States and abroad in terms of the international labor movement's willingness to engage with countries whose policies it found suspect.

Given the Cold War imperatives, a by-now-familiar pattern emerged, in which American political pragmatism and self-interest trumped any rhetorical commitment to democracy. In the Congo, for example, and despite the fact that Irving Brown had championed him as the best choice for navigating the transition from colony to independent state, many Americans viewed Patrice Lumumba's ouster and the eventual dictatorship by Joseph Désiré Mobutu as a victory over possible Soviet subversion of a democratically elected Congolese state. Several years later in Ghana, the AFL-CIO lauded the return of a "free" Ghanaian trade union movement in the wake of a military coup against Nkrumah. While the trade unions were certainly more free, Ghana's polity would lurch back and forth between a series of less democratic rulers in the three decades following Nkrumah's overthrow. Even in the face of the universally abhorrent apartheid regime, the AFL-CIO found it difficult to overcome its Cold War prejudice. The ANC's relationship with Eastern Bloc nations and its alliance with the South African Communist Party meant that the AFL-CIO would keep that party at arm's length throughout the 1980s, thus guaranteeing its peripheral role in the evolution of a more democratic trade union movement in that country.

In many respects, those Cold War pressures damaged, if not doomed, any prospects for a united and effective African trade union body. Neither the ATUC nor the AATUF ever amounted to much. Despite all the Cold War–inflected posturing, the two would eventually unite in the 1970s.

The AFL-CIO's antipathy toward the ICFTU further undermined the likelihood that their efforts in Africa would bear fruit. The decision to withdraw from the ICFTU hobbled the Confederation's International Solidarity Fund, which provided assistance to its foreign programs. As modernization theory began to take hold, the AFL-CIO would retool its own African efforts under the auspices of the African American Labor Center, a counterpart to the other foreign policy institutes operated by the federation. It implemented a developmentalist model and became a conduit for aid from the US Agency for International Development. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it became more difficult for the AFL-CIO to continue its vociferous stand against government-labor cooperation as it channeled such aid to dozens of countries on the continent.

Overall, the AFL-CIO's reaction toward neutralism in Africa was quite similar to its broader approach in Cold War foreign-policy making. Handicapped in part by strong anti-Communist leanings on the part of many of those involved, American labor leaders regularly acted reflexively in cases involving superpower politics. In many instances though, they were also capable of surprising sensitivity to developments in African labor and political affairs. However limited by their politics, Irving Brown, Maida Springer, and George McCray managed to do some good; even their most bitter opponents in the neutralism debate would later recall their efforts with respect.

Workers in the developing world often found the one-size-fits-all American union model exported to their countries sadly inadequate. Instead, they desired structures, procedures, and protections that had been adapted to their needs. They sought three principal things: Rapid industrial and economic development to leave the legacy of colonialism behind as quickly as possible, participation in nationalist politics as their colonies evolved into independent states, and some control over the conditions under which they worked and how they were compensated for that work. The models pushed by the AFL-CIO and the ICFTU for much of this period only promised to address the last of those goals, revealing an intractable gulf between an American or a British model of trade unionism and those in places like Ghana and Kenya. For US labor leaders, neutralism was usually tantamount to submission to some type of Communist intrigue, while their African peers often agreed with the leaders of their respective political parties that neutralism smoothed the path toward modernity and legitimacy.

Notes

1. Foreign Service Despatch 9, U.S. Embassy Accra, to Department of State, March 19, 1957, in "Folder B—Program 1957," Box 1, Ghana, Accra, General USIS Records 1951–1958, Record Group 84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (henceforth, RG84, NA). This foreign service dispatch included a transcript of a speech then Vice President Richard Nixon gave as he departed Ghana. Nixon apparently related the above quotation numerous times during his trip as something Nkrumah had told him.
2. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963, vol. 21, Africa*, 382. Cited in Sergey Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956–1964* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010), 217.
3. Yevette Richards, *Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000).
4. Copy, letter by Irving Brown, August 8, 1956, in folder 13, box 56, subseries 2, series 9, Records Group (henceforth, RG) 1–027, Office of the President, George Meany, 1952–1960, George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, Maryland (henceforth, GMMA). This letter likely went either to Lovestone or directly to George Meany.
5. Alfred O. Hero and Emil Starr, *The Reuther-Meany Foreign Policy Dispute: Union Leaders and Members View World Affairs* (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, 1970), 44. Hero and Starr overstate the apparent dichotomy between the AFL and CIO, mostly by underestimating the activism and attitudes of Brown, Springer, and McCray in the African context.

6. Anthony Carew, Michel Dreyfus, Geert Van Goethem, Rebecca Gumbrell-McCormick, and Marcel van der Linden, eds., *The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000), 248–249.
7. Charles Millard to J. H. Oldenbroek, January 3, 1956, in Folder 1121c, "Personal Correspondence to JH Oldenbroek, 1956–1960," Correspondence of the General Secretary J. H. Oldenbroek, Archives of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions 1949–1993, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Netherlands. (henceforth, IISG-ICFTU) Millard was likely referring to a Canadian Labour Congress committee, not an ICFTU one. He claimed that he only sought the position "to offset any real attempt to put either [Laurie] Short or Brown in that job. I suppose no one relishes being used as a pawn on an AFL-CIO chess board. . . . having watched Meany and Brown in action at the ICFTU and knowing something about the importance of the job to be done, I just felt that . . . we . . . couldn't afford to take the chance of letting an unwelcome choice be made." Meany's tirade is described in A. H. Raskin, "Meany Says Nehru and Tito Aid Reds," *New York Times,* December 14, 1955, accessed online September 24, 2011.
8. Anthony Carew, *Walter Reuther* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 95–96.
9. Lovestone to Meany, April 5, 1957, in folder, "Meany, George, 1950–1959," box 379, Jay Lovestone Papers, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, California (henceforth, JLP, HI). Ted Morgan's biography of Lovestone is a relatively balanced account of Lovestone's career. See Ted Morgan, *A Covert Life: Jay Lovestone: Communist, Anti-Communist, and Spymaster* (New York: Random House, 1999).
10. Ben Rathbun, *The Point Man: Irving Brown and the Deadly-Post 1945 Struggle for Europe and Africa* (London: Minerva Press, 1996).
11. Yevette Richards, *Maida Springer*. See also Yevette Richards, *Conversations with Maida Springer: A Personal History of Labor, Race, and International Relations* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004).
12. Much of this information is contained in a statement given by St. Clair Drake to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1951, in folder 43, box 7, St. Clair Drake papers, 1935–1990, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York (henceforth, SC). Dr. Christophe McCray provided supplementary evidence in telephone conversations with the author on October 7, 1999, October 8, 1999, and February 5, 2000. According to Dr. McCray, his father never went to high school, making his later achievements all the more notable.
13. Ibid. McCray's union position gleaned from stationery. See, for example, McCray to Randolph, September 9, 1955, in frames 525–526, Reel 3, A. Philip Randolph Papers (microfilm), SC.
14. Richards, *Maida Springer*, 99. Telephone conversations with Dr. Christophe McCray, October 7–8, 1999.
15. Richards, *Maida Springer*, 177. McCray's own enthusiasm for pan-Africanism and newly independent Ghana caused the US government to order him to tone down his rhetoric and actions during his first visit there (McCray served as a Smith-Mundt educational specialist on behalf of the government).
16. American Embassy, Accra, to Department of State, February 24, 1958, in 511.45j3/2–2458, RG59, NA.
17. George McCray to St. Clair Drake, November 22, 1957, in folder 43, box 7, St. Clair Drake Papers, SC.
18. George McCray to Arnold Zander, president, AFSCME, January 4, 1958, in folder "Ghana," box 461, JLP, HI. George Morris claims that during Zander's tenure, the two heads of international affairs for AFSCME were CIA agents and that until 1964, AFSCME received $60,000 annually to channel to unions abroad, mostly in Latin

America. George Morris, *CIA and American Labor: the Subversion of the AFL-CIO's Foreign Policy* (New York: International Publishers, 1967), 149–150. See also Robert Anthony Waters Jr. and Gordon Oliver Daniels, "When You're Handed Money on a Platter, It's Very Hard to Say, 'Where Are You Getting This?'": The AFL-CIO, the CIA, and British Guiana," *Revue Belge de Philologie et D'Histoire* 84 (2006).

19. McCray to Zander, January 4, 1958, in folder "Ghana," box 461, JLP, HI. Interestingly enough, when the AFL-CIO began to reengage with South African unions in the 1970s and 1980s, it chose to back African nationalist union groups rather than the politically suspect SACTU or those unions associated with the African National Congress or the South African Communist Party.
20. Paul S. Gray, *Unions and Leaders in Ghana: A Model of Labor and Development* (New York: Conch Magazine Ltd., 1981), 31. Gray describes the "give-and-take" nature of negotiations between the GTUC and the CPP government; he notes astutely that "in some cases, individual actors were co-members in both labor and political organizations." *Ibid.*, 29. As Gray notes, while the New Structure received almost universal condemnation in Western labor circles, it was something that had been suggested by the British labor movement as early as 1953 in an effort to consolidate a bewildering array of small and unsustainable unions into more effective clusters. When pressed on the matter, American critics focused principally on the role of the Ghana government in legislating the structure rather than it being driven solely within the Ghanaian labor movement.
21. Jay Lovestone to Irving Brown, March 26, 1957, in folder 4, "Brown, Irving: Correspondence to, 1954–1957," box 13, International Affairs Department, Jay Lovestone Files, 1939–1974, RG 18–003, GMMA; Irving Brown to George Meany, November 9, 1957, in folder, "Brown, Irving, 1954–1957," box 355, JLP, HI; Jay Lovestone to Maida Springer, November 22, 1957, in folder 23, "Springer, Maida, 1957," box 60, RG18–003, GMMA.
22. Copy, letter, A. Philip Randolph to Charles Millard, January 21, 1958, in folder, "AFL-CIO Programs, Correspondence, 1957–1985," box 1 (1999 addition), Maida Springer Kemp Papers, Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.
23. Tom Mboya to Maida Springer, June 6, 1958 and June 11, 1958, in folder 27, "Kenya: Correspondence, 1958–1960," box 2, series 2, Maida Springer Kemp Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. While several ICFTU staff over time earned the derision of their African peers, British TUC representative Albert Hammerton was probably the most disliked. The ICFTU made clear that Hammerton would work for the central ICFTU and not be attached to AFRO. Ghana's John Tettegah raised the issue of Hammerton's participation again in a meeting of the ICFTU executive board in November 1958, saying that all of the African delegates asked that he not be used in Africa by the ICFTU. Report on the ICFTU Executive Board, probably by Irving Brown, November 28, 1958, folder 23, box 6, International Affairs Department, Irving Brown Files, RG 18–004, GMMA.
24. "Trade union 'neutralism,'" *Free Labour World* 98 (1958): 1–4.
25. While not mentioned as often as the WFTU or ICFTU, there was a third international, the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions.
26. Maida Springer, "Observations on the All-African People's Conference Held in Accra, Ghana, December 5–13, 1958 and its Trade Union Implications," n.d., in folder "Brown, Irving, 1959," box 356, JLP, HI. Yevette Richards cites this quote in Richards, *Maida Springer*, 185. See also Irving Brown, "Report on the All African Peoples Conference," n.d. in folder 8, box 2, RG18–004, GMMA.
27. At the 1961 founding conference of the AATUF, Tom Mboya walked out once it became clear that disaffiliation was one of its main tenets. See David Goldsworthy, *Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget* (Nairobi, Kenya: Heinemann, 1982),

186–187. Goldsworthy notes that the "ATUC's charter differed very little from AATUF's except that it left member unions free to decide on their international affiliations." *Ibid,* 187.

28. James H. Meriwether, *Proudly We Can Be Africans: Black Americans and Africa, 1935–1961* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 198–200. Meriwether notes that at least in 1960, "Nkrumah came across as Africa's spokesman."
29. Irving Brown to Jay Lovestone, January 6, 1960, in folder, "Brown, Irving, 1960," box 356, JLP, HI.
30. Jay Lovestone to Irving Brown, July 18, 1960, in Folder 6, "Brown, Irving: Correspondence to, 1960," box 13, RG18–003, GMMA.
31. Lovestone wrote Brown that the United States had "yet to pay the full price for the folly of our government letting Khrushchev come to our country and take over Camp David and the streets of our city. I think this will go down in the history books of the most costly blunder of any idiotic administration. When I say this, I am not trying to give you the impression that I have the slightest faith in any foreign policy engineered and applied by Stevenson or Chet Bowles. That is the tragedy of our situation." Letter, Lovestone to Brown, August 5, 1960, in folder 6, "Brown, Irving: Correspondence to, 1960," box 13, RG18–003, GMMA.
32. Maida Springer, "Summary of Six Weeks in Africa (September 21 – November 6, 1960)," November 14, 1960, in folder 3, box 14, RG18–001, GMMA. Springer cited the fact that more Ghanaian unionists were headed to the United States for training and that the GTUC had asked the AFL-CIO for an adviser to assist in the preparation of a history of the Ghanaian labor movement. Springer also reiterated her belief that the duo of Tom Mboya and the AFL-CIO had done more than any others to keep Africans loyal to the ICFTU. Also quoted in Richards, *Maida Springer*, 208.
33. McCray worried that Haile Selassie might be making a bid for leadership of the pan-African movement in 1960. Although qualifying his information as rumor, he wrote St. Clair Drake, "You might want to alert Kwame." George McCray to St. Clair Drake, February 7, 1960, in folder 5, box 12, Saint Clair Drake Papers, SC. St. Clair Drake would later leave Ghana disillusioned by Nkrumah's heavy-handed treatment of the political opposition and his crushing of a major industrial strike.
34. Memorandum, G. Mennen Williams to Acting Secretary, State, July 24, 1962, in folder, "Governor Williams' European Talks, 1962," box 8, Office of West African Affairs—Country Files, 1951–1963, State Department Lot Files, General Records of the Department of State, RG 59, NA.
35. "General Impressions," N.A. (likely Brown), January 15, 1962, in folder 11, "All African Trade Union Confederation, 1962," box 3, RG 18–004, GMMA.
36. Memorandum by P. H. de Jonge on International Conference on Economic Sanctions against South Africa, February 28, 1964, in Personal Correspondence to Omer Becu, 1960–1969, 1123c, IISG-ICFTU. De Jonge was responding to the presence of Russian sponsors of the event, something which the African National Congress had insisted upon as indicative of "'universality," . . . which is in line with the current African attitude of neutralism."
37. Mazov, 217–221.

Chapter Fourteen

"Free Labor versus Slave Labor": Free Trade Unionism and the Challenge of War-Torn Asia

Edmund F. Wehrle, Jr.

The general worldview that guided mainstream US labor's foreign policy from the 1930s to the end of the Cold War remained remarkably consistent. Among the key leaders and policymakers navigating labor's international relations, all shared a general devotion to an ideology they characterized as "free trade unionism," an outlook that emphasized steadfast commitment to internationalism, trade union autonomy, and anticommunism. American labor strove to cultivate anti-Communist, independent trade unions throughout the world and to quarantine so-called fake unions emanating from behind the Iron Curtain. Not all US trade unionists shared this outlook. Some sought flexibility while accepting the basic tenets of free trade unionism; a few rejected it entirely, calling instead for reconciliation between East and West and closer labor-state relations under a Socialist system. These voices, however, remained always a distinct minority. Labor leaders and their membership overwhelmingly supported the free trade union agenda.

This chapter briefly considers the roots of US free trade unionism, then moves in a transnational direction to consider the efforts of free trade unionists to extend their worldview to Asia. It was in Southeast Asia, in fact, where free trade unionism encountered its greatest challenge. Determined to transform a struggling labor movement in South Vietnam into a bulwark against communism and a model for the region, the AFL-CIO poured considerable resources into Southeast Asia beginning in the 1950s. But the Federation's support for the subsequent US war in Vietnam divided the labor movement and alienated labor from its liberal allies. Meanwhile, Vietnamese labor never matched the AFL-CIO's expectations. Nevertheless, free trade unionism survived the Vietnam War. Revitalized by the language of human rights, the ideology helped contribute to the end of the Cold War and remains an influence to this day.

"We Do Not Recognize or Concede that the Russian Worker Groups Are Trade Unions"

Much of what later became the free trade union ideology was laid out by the AFL's first president, Samuel Gompers. A student of Marx, Gompers maintained a running correspondence with prominent European Marxists, including Marx's daughter and his collaborator Frederick Engels, whom Gompers once assured of his "respect for your judgment, having been a student of your writing and those of Marx."[1] Yet unlike most Socialists, Gompers saw little benefit from a close relationship with the state. Sharing the socialist vision of a united working class, Gompers worked to internationalize his vision, aiming to promote independent labor unions worldwide. American labor, Gompers planned, would provide a transnational model.[2]

Gompers' vision had its dark, insular side. He attacked immigration and Asian labor with racist vehemence (common for the day) as a pernicious threat to the aspirations of independent white labor.[3] Still, Gompers' internationalism and vision of labor as an autonomous beacon to the world profoundly moved his successor generation. Nowhere was this more the case than with Gompers' anti-communism. The AFL president dedicated the last years of his life to a sustained critique of Bolshevism, which he advanced as the premier danger to the ambitions of workers worldwide.

The framers of what later emerged as free trade unionism, however, often emerged directly from the social ranks that Gompers denounced as "impossibilists" for their vision of labor-state cooperation. ILGWU President David Dubinsky, for instance, was a dedicated Socialist, eager to forge alliances with management and the state. Jay Lovestone, who became a leading adviser to Dubinsky and later the AFL, began his career as the head of the American Communist Party before breaking ranks with Stalinists. George Meany, while often characterized as a crude, bread-and-butter unionist, also bore the imprint of New York City's bustling Socialist world. As a young trade unionist, he forged close ties with Jewish Socialists such as Dubinsky and became enamored with the intellectually vibrant Socialist world in New York City.

Meany, Lovestone, Dubinsky, and others converged by the early 1930s to put forth a more sophisticated, updated version of Gompersism. While sharing Gompers's internationalism and vision of labor as an independent force (even as they sometimes entered corporate-type relationships with employers and the state), they did not share his racism (immigration, of course, now of declining significance due to immigration restrictions). Encouraged by the potential of the New Deal model of labor-state cooperation, they also worked to expand positive cooperation with government agencies and the Democratic Party, while insisting that labor maintain its essential independence (contradictory impulses they never reconciled).

The internationalists, organized around Meany's secretary general office at the national AFL and the ILGWU offices in New York City, pressed their cause for a robust, anti-Communist foreign policy. But their first united actions aimed at Fascism, not Soviet communism. The group helped organize a labor boycott of products for Nazi Germany and created relief programs for those fleeing Fascism.

At the same time, they vocally subscribed to the notion of "Red Fascism," conflating Fascism and communism. As George Meany explained to an assemblage of New York trade unionists in 1940, there existed no "important difference between a dictatorship of the Nazi-Fascist type and a dictatorship like that of Stalin."[4]

Meany's internationalism and anticommunism competed against other strong currents within the American labor movement. Sidney Hillman, for instance, the politically influential leader of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) advocated cooperation not conflict with the Soviet Union and domestic Communists. He also pressed for a corporate model of governance that those in the AFL felt went too far, threatening union autonomy (even as they themselves forged new ties with New Deal agencies). On the other end of the spectrum, key elements of the AFL leadership were dedicated isolationists. AFL President William Green issued a pamphlet in 1939 titled "No European Entanglements." "Labor firmly believes that we should have no part in this European war," insisted Green. "We have no part in its causes, and can have no responsible part in it adjustments."[5] United Mine Workers of America and CIO President John L. Lewis took his isolationism further, assailing President Roosevelt and what he saw as an "overdose of war propaganda."[6]

During and after World War II, the ground shifted against Meany's opponents. Following Roosevelt's reelection in 1940, Lewis, who had bitterly opposed a third term for FDR, resigned from the CIO. With Pearl Harbor, labor isolationists lost all remaining legitimacy. Meanwhile Meany, Lovestone, and Dubinsky marshaled their resources, working with the Office of Strategic Services to support anti-Fascist trade unionists in Europe. While supporting America's wartime alliance with the Soviet Union, the AFL made clear it was merely a temporary alliance, born of expedience. "[W]hile we can work together for victory in war," Meany editorialized in the *American Federationist*, "we cannot plan together for peace."[7]

No sooner had the war ended then the AFL internationalists embarked on a new war—its own early Cold War. To prepare for its new war, in 1944, the Federation launched a semiautonomous organization, the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC). Lovestone, serving as FTUC secretary from his offices in New York City, essentially ran the organization, which AFL internationalists envisioned as a base for mounting a postwar anti-Communist counteroffensive in Western Europe.[8]

Only weeks after the end of the war, Meany traveled to Blackpool, the gritty British resort town on the Irish Sea, to address the annual Trades Union Congress (TUC) Convention. There, he aimed to set out in no uncertain terms the linchpin provision of free trade unionism: A no-contact policy between the free trade unions of the West and their counterfeit counterparts in the East. In a tense speech before a hostile TUC crowd, a gathering that included a visiting Russian delegate, the blunt Meany was at his most blunt. "We do not recognize or concede that the Russian worker groups are trade unions," he pronounced. No common ground could exist between Communist "fronts" and Western unions. "What could we talk about?" Meany mockingly inquired, "The latest innovations being used by the secret police?"[9] As the Russian delegate leaned forward and strained to follow,

the audience shuffled their feet and coughed loudly. Heckles of "tommyrot" and "shame" met Meany's lambasting of "pseudo-trade unions" in Russia.[10] The oldest delegate present could not remember a speech so frequently interrupted by chants of "Withdraw! Withdraw!" (a British form of booing) and other jeers.[11]

Within the AFL, Meany's line ran supreme. The aged William Green dropped his isolationism and essentially allowed Meany and Lovestone control of the Federation's foreign policy apparatus. But within the labor movement in the immediate years after the war, opposition, spurred by Hillman and others, calling for cooperation with the Soviet Union also made headwind, often with the support of the US government. Key CIO officials, including Hillman, eager to build on wartime alliances, joined with the TUC to create the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), an international labor organization aimed at uniting trade unions in both the East and the West. To free trade unionists, the WFTU legitimated brutal Soviet conquest of lands gained during the recent war.

With the support of the AFL's intrepid European agent, Irving Brown, the FTUC managed to undermine the WFTU and launch its own alternative: the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU, an organization founded by the AFL and CIO in 1949 to counter the WFTU). The CIO, an early and enthusiastic sponsor of the WFTU, abandoned the enterprise in 1949. By that time, a group of younger trade unionists, including Walter Reuther, more anti-Communist in their orientation, had taken over and begun to steer the organization toward the free-trade-union line. The US government, also an early supporter of the WFTU, likewise, shifted its orientation dramatically toward the AFL's perspective by the late 1940s. Marshall Plan and CIA funds now were readily available for Brown's work in Europe.

Increasingly then, free trade unionism came together and emerged as the dominant ideology of the US labor movement's leaders—although much of the rank-and-file appeared to have more particularistic concerns (embracing the anti-Communist paradigm of the times while retaining qualms about foreign aid and liberalized international trade). The language of free trade unionism could be uncompromising, even hyperbolic. "[M]ake no mistake about it," Meany warned the New York State Federation of Labor in 1951, "the prime objective of the brutal rulers in the Kremlin is the control and enslavement of the people of the USA."[12] Subversion of independent labor, free trade unionists tirelessly maintained, was step one of Leninist revolutionary strategy. Potent, independent, anti-Communist unions represented the front line in the modern battle between slavery and freedom. To Meany, no "partnership, united front or joint action of even the most limited sort" could be abided between free and Communist trade unions. To the contrary, free labor must "be the spearhead of the democratic world in energetically exposing totalitarianism of all shades and stripes."[13]

Yet free trade unionists were more than Joe McCarthy sporting blue collars. The call for a principled distance between labor and state made sense for American labor both historically and given the counteroffensive waged by conservative forces in the postwar era. Worldwide, free trade unionists saw their approach as a third way between oppressive statism and unfettered capitalism. Likewise, unlike McCarthy, free trade unionists had a firsthand experience with communism (some, in fact, were

former Communists). The subversive methods and undemocratic practices wielded by Communists were not abstract issues. Communist leadership in the Soviet Union and Warsaw Bloc countries tolerated little dissent. If freedom to join a labor organization represented a basic human right, as free trade unionists insisted, then workers behind the Iron Curtain resembled forced labor stripped of its humanity.

Still the increasingly close ties between Federation leaders and the US government—which included a partnership between unionists and the CIA (explored elsewhere in these essays)—raise legitimate questions regarding the extent to which the AFL and subsequent AFL-CIO truly represented the polar opposite of those craven trade unions behind the Iron Curtain, controlled and maintained by the state. Free trade unionists rarely engaged the question, satisfied that in the grand scheme the autonomy they maintained, even if occasionally compromised, represented their essential legitimacy. In the aggregate, such views were valid: Western-style corporatism and worker organizations controlled by the state were and are two essentially different entities. However, as the extent to which the AFL-CIO compromised its ideals became clear, the organization appeared tainted in a manner that led many to see a certain moral equivalency between Eastern and Western labor organizations.

Free Trade Unionism in Asia

Driven by this global vision, free trade unionists set out to shore up free labor movements worldwide. Beginning in Western Europe immediately after the war, where Irving Brown helped forge alternatives to Communists unions, the AFL and subsequent AFL-CIO moved to take its crusade to the "third world" by the early 1950s. There it believed the Soviet Union was making a play for workers in emerging third world countries. Free trade unionists confidently believed they could turn back the Communist challenge, but especially in war-torn Asia, they faced shifting politics, poverty, colonialism, and extreme instability.

Interest in China among free trade unionists dated to the 1930s, when Dubinsky and others worked with organizations such as the United Service to China, promoting education and relief for the Chinese. The Chinese Revolution in 1949 lent new urgency to the mandate to challenge communism in Asia. Shortly after Mao Zedong's triumph, the FTUC urged the United Nations not to admit the People's Republic of China, which represented "the Communist clique of usurpers who, with the aid of foreign funds, have seized power in China."[14] Fear of "Red" China consumed not only labor's leadership, but its membership as well. In 1951 during the Korean War, AFL-affiliated longshoremen refused to unload a Norwegian ship in Boston harbor because it carried products from China.[15]

Faced with the "loss" of China, the AFL and CIO ramped up operations elsewhere in Asia. Both anticommunism and anticolonialism drove US labor's Asian agenda. Returning from India in January 1950, Irving Brown lamented, "Unless we break with the past in Indonesia, in Indo-China, in South Africa . . . there will be no hope for maintaining what is left of Asia."[16] Meanwhile, he warned of a nefarious Soviet agent, F.G. Jakovlev, stationed in Siam and assigned to infiltrate the

emerging labor movements of Southeast Asia.[17] To reverse dangerous trends, Brown pressed the AFL and the ICFTU to give "top priority" to organization campaigns in the region. He could, he told an ICFTU Emergency Committee in 1950, "think of no more pressing task than organizing in Southeast Asia."[18]

Already the AFL's FTUC had assigned Richard Deverall, a former UAW education officer and US GI, as its Asian representative, stationed out of Tokyo. Deverall helped forge Sohyo (the General Council of Trade Unions), a labor organization designed to thwart Communist gains among other Japanese unions (Sohyo ultimately disappointed its US sponsors by becoming more radical than free trade unionists had originally hoped).[19] Additionally, both the AFL and CIO dispatched agents to Indonesia to challenge the Communist-leaning All-Indonesia Central Labor Organization. They made little headway, however, in the face of economic chaos and the rising power of the left-leaning Sukarno.

Indochina, although the scene of even greater chaos, ironically appeared more hospitable to free trade union aspirations. In 1950, an ICFTU task force that included Deverall, AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Gordon Chapman, and United Mine Workers official John Brophy swept through Southeast Asia in 1950.[20] In Vietnam, they briefly encountered a nascent organization of Indochinese workers, eager to challenge colonialism while wary of the Viet Minh, which were then mounting stubborn resistance to the French. Impressed, American trade unionists began to push their government to sponsor training programs for Vietnamese trade unionists.

Interest continued to grow among Americans, as the Vietnamese unionists successfully pressed the French for greater rights, which eventually provided the organization legal status, and it took the name, the Vietnamese Confederation of Christian Workers (CVTC). By early 1952, the AFL's Executive Council weighed in with a strongly worded statement: "Resistance to communist aggression in Indo-China should be made more effective by stripping it of every appearance of a nineteenth century colonial campaign."[21]

Fearing for the future of this new movement, the AFL vocally opposed the 1954 decision to divide Vietnam. George Meany assailed the decisions at Geneva as "appeasement" on "a world scale which would make Munich pale into insignificance."[22] The division of Vietnam and creation of a separate South Vietnam further cemented relations between the CVTC and American labor. To free trade unionists, the CVTC's anticommunism and independence proffered a rare bright spot in an Asia veering toward Chinese/Soviet control. The CVTC, US trade unionists hoped, might emerge a bulwark against communism in Southeast Asia and a model for free labor organizations elsewhere in the region.

Yet, ironically, the very independence that the AFL-CIO so admired in the CVTC also created tensions. Vietnamese trade unionists resisted affiliation in the ICFTU, fearing it would alienate its sponsors in the French Christian trade union movement. It also insisted that any support from Americans be modest and "provided with as little public attention as possible" because of the fear that the organization would be labeled as "American supported." Instead, the CVTC requested that assistance discretely be channeled through the Vietnamese Ministry of Labor.[23]

Soon the CVTC's independent streak caused conflict with another decidedly less flexible sponsor: Ngo Dinh Diem, leader of the new South Vietnamese state created after the Geneva Conference. Diem initially courted labor and valued its support. But the CVTC's penchant for independence rankled the mercurial leader. When the CVTC refused to endorse candidates chosen by Diem's political party, the government launched a crackdown against the CVTC, which it now viewed as a threat.

The *AFL News-Reporter* had praised Diem as a "progressive" and a "reformist," willing to fight landlords and "feudal forces."[24] Now US labor found itself in an awkward position: Uneasy about attacking an anti-Communist government in a pivotal region, yet concerned for the future of free labor in South Vietnam. As the position of the CVTC leadership grew more precarious and some suffered arrest, the AFL-CIO could do little more than urge its US government contacts to pressure Diem to ease his persecution of labor. Free trade union aspirations for Southeast Asia went into deep freeze. "Unless there is a cleansing of the Augean stables and an introduction of new, hopeful political elements into the regime, the masses, especially the peasants—will not defend the regime no matter what this government or the USA says," Irving Brown reported to Meany after a 1961 tour of Vietnam.[25]

The coup overthrowing Diem in 1963, however, revived dormant hopes for free trade unionism in Vietnam. Backed up by a supportive US embassy, the CVT (having dropped "Christian" from its official title) quickly moved to make up for lost time, launching aggressive organizing campaigns throughout South Vietnam. Free trade unionists reveled in the possibilities offered by the resurgent organization. Irving Brown even spoke of it as "a possible para-military" force that could be wielded against the insurgent Viet Cong.[26]

A daring general strike launched by the CVT in the fall of 1964 underscored the potential of the organization, as well as its liabilities. Following the strike, in which the Saigon government was forced to make concessions, officials arrested the president of the CVT on charges (probably false) of conspiring against the government. Both the AFL-CIO and the US embassy pressed strongly from behind the scenes for an acquittal. It came, but the CVT remained vulnerable. Likewise, increased Viet Cong attacks put into question the future of the entire Republic of Vietnam.

For free trade unionists, the CVT's potential and vulnerability mandated stronger action by the United States and US labor. Already the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had greatly extended foreign aid programs, many of which benefited organized labor's foreign policy initiatives. Now the AFL-CIO moved to establish a formal organization, the Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI), funded by the federal government and operated by US trade unionists to promote free trade unionism throughout Asia (a program similar to the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) in Latin America and the African American Labor Center (AALC) in Africa). This, of course, called for a closer relationship with the US government—further stretching the bounds of free trade unionism. Meany and his acolytes maintained they could accept US Agency for International Development (AID) money yet remain autonomous—have their

cake and eat it too. But, as war began in Southeast Asia in 1965—a war strongly supported by the AFL-CIO—this line proved impossible to maintain.

From the start, despite the AFL-CIO's emphatic pronouncements of "unstinting support" for Johnson's Vietnam War, dissent within US labor could not be denied. Protesters disrupted that year's AFL-CIO biannual convention, infiltrating the gallery and loudly chanting antiwar slogans. Meanwhile, unions that traditionally dissented from the free trade union line—organizations that remained in the distinct minority such as the New York City, Hospital Workers Local 1199 under radical Leon Davis, the Amalgamated Meatcutters, the Actors Equity and Screen Actors Guild, and Harry Bridges' International Longshoremen on the West Coast—came out vocally against the war. The ACWA, a larger mainstream organization, joined in questioning the "burden of expense" of the war and complained that "the sons of workers . . . are being drafted first for military duty."[27]

The war also opened cleavages with those who basically followed the free trade union line but sought more flexibility—in particular, Walter Reuther, the charismatic president of the United Auto Workers (UAW) and vice president of the AFL-CIO. Reuther had long espoused the value of contact across the Iron Curtain. In 1959, he defied Meany and met with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev (who reportedly later quipped, "We hung the likes of Reuther back in 1917").[28] Seeking distance from Meany's hardline on Vietnam, Reuther's brother Victor revealed that the CIA had funded the AFL's work in Western Europe during the early Cold War period (Victor also accepted CIA funds during this same period as the CIO's European representative). These revelations struck at the core of free trade unionism, suggesting that US labor had betrayed the autonomy it so trumpeted. Within the AFL-CIO, Walter Reuther pushed Meany and the AFL-CIO leadership to soften somewhat its prowar rhetoric. Tensions quickly heated up, and Reuther resigned from the AFL-CIO Executive Council. Increasingly he moved toward an antiwar position.

Nor did news from Vietnam itself bring relief. The CVT continued to struggle with Saigon authorities. The government of Nguyen Cao Ky proved so antilabor that in 1965 Meany felt compelled to issue a stern public statement demanding that the regime halt its "hostile attitude and acts against the CVT and peasant organizations."[29] Personality disputes also broke out between AFL-CIO representatives sent to counsel the CVT leadership, which often found Americans overbearing and insensitive. Additionally, as with the AFL-CIO in America, smaller opposition unions in South Vietnam attacked the CVT, from both the Right and the Left.

Nevertheless, free trade unionists remained confident that they were making progress in Vietnam. All parties believed the war would soon end and the real battle for social and economic progress could commence. The CVT, American labor believed, would play a central role reconstructing a democratic, just society. This, however, proved a chimera. In the early weeks of 1968, the free trade union agenda in Vietnam came under fire as never before.

The CVT aggressively had organized private employers and US government contractors in Vietnam, usually American businesses susceptible to pressure from a US embassy that was determined to build up the CVT as evidence of democracy

and progress in South Vietnam. Yet the Confederation avoided directly challenging the Saigon government for fear of reprisals. Its relations with the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), in fact, remained tense—requiring the frequent intervention of the American ambassador. In early 1968, however, CVT-affiliated electrical workers moved to challenge the South Vietnamese government, which had recently taken control of the main electrical plant serving Saigon. Workers demanded pay increases to keep pace with inflation and severance packages for those facing unemployment in the transfer of ownership. When the government refused, younger radicals within the CVT mobilized for a showdown.

On January 11, 1968, 1,000 electrical workers walked off their jobs when management refused their demands. No member of the Saigon government was more incensed by the strike than General Nguyen Loan, the head of the national police and a well-known labor hater. Loan immediately arrested the strike leaders. When his action spurred only sympathy strikes, Loan loaded five garbage trucks with police, directed the convoy to CVT headquarters, and personally delivered "requisitions," ordering that workers return immediately to their jobs or face arrest. Police ripped down strike banners and arrested anyone who dared resist. Loan's violent reputation persuaded enough workers to return to their jobs, which allowed the electrical plant to reopen at full capacity. In the wake of Loan's crackdown, sympathy strikes also petered out.[30]

The dramatic strikebreaking stirred negative publicity in America and across the world. Even as the CVT settled with the government, officials refused to release the jailed labor leaders. Then, only days after the strike was settled, Viet Cong infiltrators, under the cover of the Tet Holiday, launched a series of daring attacks on South Vietnamese cities. Saigon and the CVT were hard hit. Fighting destroyed the homes of hundreds of trade unionists. While the CVT remained loyal to the RVN government, and the entire world glimpsed the brutality of Police Chief Loan when he summarily executed a suspected terrorist in front of cameramen, the government still refused to release a remaining jailed trade unionist.[31] Only a personal visit from Irving Brown and direct intercession from the embassy brought about their release.

Challenges at home mirrored challenges abroad in 1968. Lyndon Johnson withdrew from the presidential race, and the Democratic Party descended into chaos. The election of Republican Richard Nixon in November did not portend well for initiatives such as the AFL-CIO's plans to use AID funding to further its operations in Asia. Meanwhile, Walter Reuther made the first moves toward forging a new umbrella labor organization to compete with the AFL-CIO. In early 1969, the UAW broke the 25-year-old, no-contact policy between American and Eastern European unions when Victor Reuther led a UAW delegation on an official visit to Czechoslovakia.[32] When the ICFTU, an organization essentially birthed by free trade unionists, also embraced détente, endorsed East-West contacts, and grew openly critical of the Vietnam War, the AFL-CIO summarily left the organization. Free trade unionism appeared under fire and receding throughout the world.

Determined to hold on to its agenda in Asia, the AFL-CIO, with generous funding from AID, managed to launch its AAFLI in 1968. To many, the

AFL-CIO – now indebted to Nixon for funding the AAFLI and for maintaining the war in Asia – seemed increasingly in a junior partnership with the Republican administration.

Ironically, the CVT was no more enamored with the AAFLI than were radicals who attacked the institute as a CIA front. Again Vietnamese trade unionists complained of aggressive Americans providing useless advice and compromising the CVT's claim to autonomy. Yet, like the AFL-CIO, the CVT found trade union autonomy difficult and even undesirable to sustain. In the late 1960s, the CVT launched its own political party to press its agenda, in particular, land reform.

By the early 1970s, US labor appeared increasingly divided, both from within and from its former liberal allies. Key trade unions and labor leaders turned against the war, while others in the labor movement reacted with anger. In the spring of 1970, New York City construction workers, angered by an antiwar demonstration, turned with fury on protesters in the so-called hard hat riot. The American labor movement verged at times on civil war. Meanwhile, when the Democratic Party nominated antiwar candidate George McGovern in 1972, the AFL-CIO reeled in disgust, eventually refusing to endorse the Democrat, thus helping reelect Nixon.

For all, the Paris Peace Accords of 1973 offered relief, but hardly a permanent respite from conflict. Americans lost their remaining leverage over the Saigon government, which launched a crackdown on the CVT. Again the AFL-CIO worked as a middleman behind the scenes to settle disputes and arrange the release of jailed labor leaders. Meany and free trade unionists also struggled against the tide of public opinion to maintain US aid for the struggling South Vietnamese state. As Saigon tottered in the early months of 1975, Meany ominously warned of a North Vietnamese victory: "While the fighting might stop, the killing would not."[33]

The fall of Saigon on May 1, 1975 finished off free trade union hopes for South Vietnam and seemed to signal an end to aspirations of creating a vibrant independent labor movement in Southeast Asia. Indeed, this proved largely the case. AAFLI, however, continued to operate in the region (although it obviously shifted it headquarters from the former Saigon).

Human Rights and Free Trade Unionism Revitalized

Reeling from Vietnam, free trade unionists scrambled to revitalize their agenda. Aware of the growing power of the human rights movement and groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, the Federation moved to recast their message in the language of human rights. For instance, when the AFL-CIO withdrew from the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1977 to protest the admission of a Soviet delegation, Irving Brown assailed the ILO for its "bias toward Communist countries in its failure to condemn their gross violations of human rights through forced labor."[34]

Beyond the ILO controversy, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer Lane Kirkland became co-chair of the "Committee for Human Rights," which focused aggressively on the plight of Soviet dissidents.[35] To dramatize the issue of human rights behind the Iron Curtain, the Federation invited Alexander Solzhenitsyn to tour the United

States in 1975. During the 1970s, the Federation also became a major supporter of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment linking human rights to the granting of "most favored nation" trade status.

The Soviet Union remained the AFL-CIO's primary target for human rights violations, especially those relating to labor. But Meany also denounced conditions in Chile under General Augusto Pinochet, to whom the labor chieftain addressed a letter in 1978: "When your government ceases its persecution of trade union leaders and permits unrestricted trade union organizing . . . then and only then will there be basis for believing that Chile subscribes to the universal values that human rights should merit."[36]

Such rhetoric grew only more important during the Jimmy Carter presidency, which sought to reorient foreign policy around human rights. Already outspoken on the issue, the AFL-CIO frequently turned the language of human rights around on the new president. When Carter and Federation leaders clashed over labor legislation in 1978, Meany pointedly reminded him that, "If the phrase human rights means anything, it should mean that government protects its workers."[37]

Free trade unionists in fact had brandished the term "human rights" as early as the late 1930s when the AFL commissioned Labor's League for Human Rights. US labor leaders worked to weave human rights language into the rechartering of the ILO in Philadelphia in 1944. "[A]ll human beings, irrespective of race, creed, or sex have the right to pursue both their material well being and spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity," read the final draft of the Philadelphia Declaration.[38]

Nevertheless, by the 1970s, the rhetoric of human rights took on new potency, allowing free trade unionists to link their agenda to a global movement of increasing power.[39] By the late 1970s, the message was catching on behind the Iron Curtain where Polish workers forming Solidarity (with close ties to the AFL-CIO) insisted that only independent trade unions free of the shackles of government control could represent their interests and improve their lives. Without question, free trade unionism contributed to the end of the Cold War.

In Asia, however, the record is mixed. Even after the Vietnam War, the AAFLI, run by the AFL-CIO with funding from AID, continued to operate. It cultivated organizations such as the Thai Trade Unions Congress, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, and the Bangladesh Free Trade Union Council. Most often, however, as in Vietnam, its greatest service was protecting trade unionists from repressive governments—often by using the leverage of US aid.

In the 1990s, a new generation of American labor leaders took over the AFL-CIO and shuttered the AAFLI, AIFLD, and the AALC. But in an increasingly globalized world, the Federation hardly can afford to ignore international affairs. It has emerged a particularly vocal critic of the People's Republic of China. As much as labor leaders such as AFL-CIO President Tony Trumka might want to distance themselves from the likes of the hawkish George Meany, Trumka consistently relies on the language of both human rights and free trade unionism in his critiques of China. In particular, the AFL-CIO has eschewed any contacts with the state-run All China Federation of Trade Unions.[40] Time will tell if Trumka's brand of free

trade unionism has any more effect on the region than that of an earlier generation of American trade unionists.

Notes

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3. Frank Wu, *Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 15; Julie Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics: The AFL and Political Activism, 1881–1917* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 41–42.
4. Meany's speech to Syracuse Federation of Labor, September 2, 1940, 7/1, Meany Secretary-Treasurer Papers, George Meany Memorial Archives, Silver Spring, MD (henceforth, GMMA). On "Red Fascism," see Thomas G. Paterson and Les Adler, "The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930s–1950s," *American Historical Review* 7 (1970).
5. Andrew Kersten, *Labor's Homefront: The American Federation of Labor During World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 4. Also see Craig Phelan, *William Green: Biography of a Labor Leader* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), 159–160.
6. Albert Fried, *FDR and His Enemies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 162. Also see John Schacht, *Three Faces of Midwestern Isolationism: Gerald P. Nye, Robert Wood, and John L. Lewis* (Iowa City, IA: Center for Recent History, 1981).
7. *American Federationist*, December 1944.
8. Anthony Carew, *Labour Under the Marshall Plan* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 63. The Federation launched the FTUC with an appeal for $1 million from affiliated unions.
9. Archie Robinson, *George Meany and His Times* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 132; Theodore Liazos, "Big Labor, George Meany, and the Making of the AFL-CIO, 1894–1955" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1998), 283–284.
10. *New York Herald,* September 13, 1945; *Daily Express* (London), September 13, 1945; Liazos, 283–284.
11. William Doherty Oral History, 3, 1/10, Merger Oral History Project, GMMA; *Daily Express* (London), September 13, 1945.
12. Meany to New York State Federation of Labor, July 31, 1950, box 7, Secretary-Treasurer Papers, GMMA.
13. George Meany, "Free Trade Unionism: Its Aims in the Struggle against the Totalitarian Menace," *Free Trade Union News*, August 1951.
14. *New York Times*, March 29, 1950.
15. *New York Times*, February 4, 1951,
16. *Free Trade Union News*, September 1950.
17. Brown to Oldenbroek, December 30, 1949, 10/5, Brown Papers, GMMA.
18. "Report on Emergency Committee Meeting," March 16 and 18, 1950, 50/19, Meany Papers, GMMA.
19. On Japan, see Christopher Gerteis, "Subjectivity Lost: Labor and the Cold War in Occupied Japan," in *Labor's Cold War: Local Politics in a Global Context*, ed., Shelton Stromquist (Urbana IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008); and Howard Schonberger, "American Labor's Cold War in Occupied Japan," *Diplomatic History* 3 (1979).
20. J. H. Oldenbroek to Leon Pignon, June 26, 1950, "Mission d'information de la CISL" folder, Haut Commissariat de France pour L'Indochine, Conseiller aux Affaires Sociales, 109, Le Centre Archives d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France.

21. "Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council of the AFL," January 22–February 5, 1952, GMMA; *AFL News-Reporter,* February 6, 1952. Also see Addresses by James B. Carey, Thirteenth Annual National Farm Institute, Des Moines, Iowa, February 17, 1951, CIO Press Releases. The CIO, through Vice President James Carey, echoed AFL calls for Indochinese independence. Noting the Communist threat and important raw materials located in the region, Carey also called for the "immediate creation of an ECA for the nations of Southeast Asia."
22. *American Federationist*, June 1954.
23. McCarthy to Barrows, Director of USOM, "Activities of CVTC," December 13, 1954, box 12, Mission to Vietnam, Office of Director, Classified Subject Files, RG 469, National Archives, College Park, MD (henceforth NA).
24. *AFL News-Reporter*, May 27, 1955.
25. Irving Brown, "Report on Vietnam Trip," November 17–21, 1961, 31/3, International Affairs Department, Country Files, GMMA.
26. Ibid.
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28. Nelson Lichtenstein, *The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit: Walter Reuther and the Fate of American Labor* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 345.
29. AFL-CIO Press Release, October 4, 1965; George Meany, "Turn for the Better in Vietnam," *American Federationist*, October 1965, 2.
30. *Saigon Post*, January 15, 1968; *Saigon Daily News*, January 14, 1968; *Le Monde*, January 15, 1968; Bunker to State Department, January 15, 1968, box 1227, Central Foreign Policy Files, Viet S, General Records of Department of State, RG 59, NA; Saigon to State Department, January 19, 1968, box 1300, Central Foreign Policy Files, Viet S, General Records of Department of State, RG 59, NA. Prime Minister Nguyen Van Loc issued the back-to-work order.
31. Bunker to Johnson, February 29, 1968, box 105, NSC Files, Vietnam, Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library, Austin, TX.
32. *UAW Washington Report*, April 17, 1969.
33. "Meany to Senate," *Free Trade Union News*, March–April 1975.
34. Richard Melanson, "Human Rights and the American Withdrawal from the I.L.O.," *Universal Human Rights* 1 (1979): 54.
35. Albert Shanker, "The Ordeal of Anatoly Marchenko in the Struggle for Human Rights," *New York Times*, April 6, 1975.
36. Mike Le Velle, "Meany Tells off Chilean Junta," *Chicago Tribune*, February 22, 1978.
37. *New York Times*, May 10, 1978.
38. "The ILO Front Line for Workers," *American Federationist*, November 1961. On the "universalist" human rights philosophy that contributed to the Philadelphia Declaration, see Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), 230. Glendon describes Eleanor Roosevelt and other advocates of human rights at the time as, **"**Universalists in the sense that they believed that human nature was everywhere the same and that the processes of experiencing, understanding and judging were capable of leading" to a better world.
39. Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *Journal of American History* 86 (1999).
40. Dean Frutiger, "AFL-CIO China Policy: Labor's New Step Forward or the Cold War Revisted?" *Labor Studies Journal* 27 (2007).

Part V
Conclusion

Transnational Labor Politics in the Global Cold War

Federico Romero

The historiography on international labor politics in the Cold War era, and particularly on the AFL-CIO's global projection, seems to be advancing in leaps and bounds. It started out at the height of America's domestic conflict about Vietnam and empire with polarized, antagonistic accounts, which lambasted the AFL's submission to the US government's imperial designs[1] or praised its independent international campaign for free trade unionism.[2] After a lull of almost 15 years, it reemerged in the late 1980s when a new crop of scholars, mostly based in Europe, addressed new issues, and some of the old ones, from a different perspective. They produced archive-based works focused not only on the nature and intent of American labor unions' foreign policy but also on its impact and effectiveness.[3] These historians framed their main questions within the contemporary debates about the political economy of Western Europe's reconstruction and its intricate relationships with US hegemony.[4]

At least a generation later, we are now witnessing the emergence of a new scholarship. It does not entirely skip some of the older questions, but it approaches them with a fresh view, as it operates within a completely changed intellectual context and historical frame of reference. As the essays collected in this book make clear, these new historians of the AFL-CIO's global projection are not only free from the ideological shibboleths of the Cold War era, which have obviously faded away. In tune with current historiographical trends, they are exploring the vast and uneven terrain of the global Cold War[5] rather than the self-contained realm of East-West polarity and trans-Atlantic relations. They incorporate the postcolonial emphasis on the independent agency and culture of actors in Asia, Africa, and especially Latin America.[6] They investigate the dynamics of transnational labor relations within the cultural and political boundaries of modernization projects, thus relating their own actors' role and agency to the American, and to a certain extent Soviet, thrust to remake the Third World according to modernization theories and predictions.[7] They are also beneficially free from any cloak-and-dagger fascination with the conspiratorial reading of history that often tarnishes the literature on the CIA's cultural and psychological Cold War, and its cooperation with American trade union officials.[8]

I will first discuss this new literature's reframing of classical issues that previous authors had already concentrated upon. In particular, the ideological roots and the main traits of the international engagement promoted by a relatively small group of AFL leaders and officials, and its relationship with the US government's emerging Cold War policies.

Geert van Goethem's essay, *From Dollars to Deeds: Exploring the Sources of Active Interventionism, 1934–1945,* goes to the origins of the AFL's global activism and illuminates its peculiar position in the international labor landscape. His focus on the anti-Fascist period of international mobilization is most precious. It highlights the networks and contacts later to be mobilized in the Cold War era. Most importantly, it retrieves the crucial 1940s' perception that no matter what precise definition one gave of workers' rights, their survival was inextricably linked with, and indeed dependent upon, the utterly political struggle against existential threats to democracy. When facing Fascism in Europe, therefore, the AFL shared a common ground with its trans-Atlantic counterparts, and its ideological thrust and political priorities were less dissimilar from European unionism than ever before, or since. The sheer peculiarity of Samuel Gompers's free trade unionism appeared momentarily less stark or more diluted within a common frame of reference defined by the anti-Fascist emergency. Among the AFL's leaders, those with a Social Democratic background and inclination were more vocal and conspicuous. It is worth noting, however, that in the American labor context, active anti-Fascist engagement remained, much more than in Europe, a prerogative of the leadership along with a few activists with recent European roots, but with relatively little grassroots mobilization or massive fund-raising. Collective solidarity with the victims of Fascism was conveyed less by political parties and trade unions—as it was the case in Europe—and much more by ethnic associations or religious organizations.

This ethnic and religious dimension mattered also at the leadership level, where the biographical experiences of officials as diverse as George Meany (a Roman Catholic of Irish descent) and David Dubinsky (a Social-Democratic Jewish emigrant from the Russian empire) infused the AFL's international outlook not only with a heightened sensitivity to Europe's predicament, but also with the keen sense of American mission that they shared with many, if not most, of their fellow US citizens. In particular, they fully participated in that quintessentially 1940s sentiment of the dawning of an "American Century," albeit interpreted in the light of their own specific trade-union culture. All their dealings with the British TUC, for instance, were characterized by their proud conviction of representing a new, more modern and successful brand of unionism. Their own experiences of migration mattered. A leader like Dubinsky had personal, often painful familiarity with both Europe and America, and felt that he could now go back to the Old World to teach it the new recipe of labor freedom and rights that his generation of union activists felt it had created in America. Italian-Americans such as Luigi Antonini and Vanni Montana carried the same smug fervor, and the Irish background of many AFL officials certainly reinforced a missionary attitude toward British trade unionists, who were often bluntly told that their weary Old-World habits had to give way to American self-confidence and dynamism.

Van Goethem's essay also illuminates the roots of the AFL leadership's uncompromising hostility to communism, and the crucial importance of ideological biases in making it precociously alert to the type of political struggle that was to unfold in postwar Europe. Compared with most of the US government's personnel, the AFL's top officials concerned with international affairs were simply more prepared and more perceptive. They had instructive contacts with European unionists, they had gone through factional battles of their own with Communist labor activists, and in a few cases they could even draw upon a direct personal experience within the Communist movement. Officials with a Communist background, like Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown, did not singlehandedly propel the AFL onto its anti-Communist international campaign. But they gave it an important intellectual and operational twist (as well as an obsessive single-mindedness) deriving from their ability to borrow from their adversaries' toolbox, to think like Communists. After all, their frame of mind had been molded by the Third International more than by any Western political or labor outfit. In a genuinely Leninist manner, they looked at trade unionism as one front of a fundamentally political and strategic warfare. As fervently anti-Communist as any of their colleagues in ideological terms, from an epistemological point of view, they closely resembled the Bolsheviks they were fighting against.

This also helps to explain one factor that in the literature usually remains underdefined, the competition with the CIO in the years preceding the merger. The AFL's internationalism during reconversion and reconstruction was also a function of its perceived vulnerability vis-à-vis a swelling CIO. They simply could not afford for the CIO to become the international representative of American labor, its main international face. The bitter domestic contest with a rival that was gaining the upper hand in many key industrial sectors required them to compete abroad as well. And in the emerging Cold War climate, the CIO could be vulnerable to the accusation of cooperation with Soviet and Communist labor unions. Domestic priorities therefore intermingled with internationalist principles in projecting the AFL onto its global struggle.

As far as the relationship between the AFL's leadership and the US government is concerned, most of these essays converge in depicting a mutual dependency, at least in the transition from World War II to the Cold War. It is certainly the most appropriate formula if we can explicitly map the different resources that each one brought to their peculiar partnership, and the timeline along which it developed. As it had already been argued in earlier works, these essays conclude that the AFL's leadership had in many ways been at the forefront of Cold War labor and psychological warfare. Quenby Olmsted Hughes shows in her essay, *The American Federation of Labor's Cold War Campaign against "Slave Labor" at the United Nations,* that the American unionists had an edge on the US government in zooming in on the Soviets' most apparent vulnerabilities, and drawing attention to them with a relentless propaganda effort. In their campaign against "slave labor," as in their early postwar focus on the centrality of international labor's political alignments, they were intellectually and factually at the vanguard of Western mobilization for the Cold War. She writes of an "alliance as a harmonious pairing of two groups with common goals" (p. 30) with an early period in which the AFL was pushing ahead while the US government was rather more cautiously

and cumbersomely following. That 1950 was a turning point on this issue, just as 1948 and the Marshall Plan had been for political warfare in the labor movement, is no surprise. The US government debate around the framing of NSC-68 was pivoted on the binary representation of a world divided between slavery and freedom, whose deep echoes from nineteenth-century US history alluded to the impossibility of such a division to last.[9] Thus, the urgency of a full-fledged offensive, which rapidly expanded from the strategic to the propaganda realm, with US government agencies taking up—and further escalating—the battle that the AFL had spearheaded. Olmsted Hughes then most interestingly explores the tensions inherent in a broad crusade for liberty that inevitably evoked the American trade unions' campaign against the Taft–Hartley law as "slave labor act," and "compelled the US government to defend, and in some cases reassess, its positions on domestic issues relating to labor, class, race, and gender" (p. 34).

That American labor leaders anticipated and in many ways stimulated the US foreign policy machinery to focus on labor unions as a key Cold War battleground is also evident in Alessandro Brogi's essay on Italy, *The AFL and CIO between "Crusade" and Pluralism in Italy, 1944–1963*, and Barrett Dower's *The Influence of the American Federation of Labor on the Force Ouvrière, 1944–1954*. Each was an early testing ground for such a relationship, and the authors highlight a few other key themes that recur in many of these essays. The first is that local settings and domestic actors were ultimately far more relevant than their international allies and sponsors. In Italy as in France, and later on in Latin America or Asia, US labor activists and diplomats could not mold and recast their interlocutors. They intended to promote pragmatic apolitical trade unionism, but they inevitably had to do that by supporting groups like Catholic labor unions that had strong ideological foundations of their own, a highly politicized agenda, and a labor doctrine quite dissimilar from "free trade unionism." Just as in the diplomatic and political realm, for trade unions too the basic pattern of transnational interaction was the marriage of convenience rather than a transformative encounter.

A second important issue concerns the anticipation of deep, cathartic political and cultural change by means of economic growth. On this, the authors confirm the crucial role played by the Marshall Plan's promise of prosperity: Not just in altering the political landscape, but also in opening up tensions and contradictions in the labor field that could hardly be resolved according to American plans and expectations. Particularly in Italy, Brogi shows how the politics of growth in a low-wage economy with a labor movement increasingly split along an ideological fault line translated into capital accumulation for investments while deferring the rise of wages and consumption. The pursuit of free trade unionism defined by Cold War priorities delivered meager economic results rather than an inclusive social compact for growth, at least in the relatively short time frame that mattered for a profound reshaping of the labor scene. In the long term, of course, the gradual consolidation of a political economy of prosperous capitalism spectacularly outweighed the allure of socialism, built up its own cultural hegemony, and induced "the erosion of Marxist-oriented class warfare" (p. 77). But many other factors, mostly of domestic or European nature, explain this historical transformation, while American

efforts at altering the postwar labor dynamic appear to have fizzled out with little consequence.

The time frame within which we assess the success or failure of such attempts at international and transnational influence is a crucial and thorny variable, which points to a serious methodological problem for these kinds of studies. This is highlighted also by the very different story told by Eric Chenoweth in his essay on the *AFL-CIO Support for Solidarity: Moral, Political, Financial.* Here we have an indisputable success story. *Solidarność* not only survived and grew but also ultimately changed the entire Cold War endgame. The AFL-CIO saw quite early, perhaps better than anybody else in the United States, the potential that the new labor insurgency had in Poland—and by extension in the whole of the Soviet empire—and threw its weight behind it. The union was more perceptive than many of its anti-Communist allies, particularly the neoconservatives, in its insistence that incentives be offered to the Polish government not to crackdown on Solidarity so as to extend and consolidate its legal existence. It appears to have been less prescient in the post-crackdown years, when it called for a stern attitude on Western credits to Poland, even though they turned out to be a useful tool to negotiate a gradual loosening of martial law and the eventual restoration of *Solidarność*'s legal status. Here, the ideological reflex of appeasement won over the more insightful perception of the possibilities of détente pursued by European governments and unions.

We still need a broader, comparative assessment of Western European and American attitudes toward Poland and Eastern Europe in the 1980s.[10] But we can already see two crucial differences with the other European cases studied by Brogi and Dower. By the late 1970s, the hegemonic pull of market capitalism and, conversely, the bankruptcy of Socialist planned economies were indisputable. Polish workers had many reasons to rebel against the regime—on nationalist, religious, and human rights grounds, among others—but they were also part of a far broader consensus on the failure of socialism and the superiority of capitalism that had simply not been there in the immediate postwar period. Nobody any longer needed to be persuaded that capitalism could deliver a more prosperous future. Secondly, the AFL-CIO—and the international campaign for *Solidarność*—could rely on, and indeed fight in the name of, labor unity, one of the strongest values in the history of trade unionism. This was a campaign predicated not on dividing the labor movement along Cold War polarities—as it had been in postwar France and Italy—but on uniting workers against an oppressive regime. It upheld an ethos and a practice of democratic unity rather than inject a contentious and contested interpretation of what a labor movement should be. Thus, it had from the very beginning a moral and cultural legitimacy that the propagandists of "free trade unionism" in postwar Western Europe could only dream of. In the 1940s, they had been striving to advertise a model of trade unionism and industrial relations born out of the American context but hardly applicable elsewhere. When supporting *Solidarność*, on the other hand, the AFL-CIO was advocating for Polish workers the freedom to pursue their own path to independence and their own, unifying model of unionism.

Yevette Richards, *Marred by Dissimulation: The AFL-CIO, the Women's Committee, and Transnational Labor Relations,* brings to the fore another revealing aspect of the AFL-CIO leadership's culture. Their defiant passivity on women's issues is particularly illuminating. When juxtaposed to their activism in the "slave labor" campaign, it gives a sort of cross section of their cultural assets and liabilities. The small group of men who led the AFL-CIO's international activities had a keen sense of their adversary's vulnerability, but their deeply ingrained conservatism compelled them to a purely perfunctory voice on women's issues. Given their obsessive Cold War sensitivity, they might have felt that gender equality and women's labor rights were issues on which their rivals could gain the upper hand, since Moscow's claims to superior gender equality were far more credible than the other achievements hyped by Soviet propaganda. Their lack of interest in women workers also betrays the extent to which their trade unionist identity had been subsumed within, if not entirely overwhelmed by, their cold-warrior role. In the Cold War battle of images and meanings waged by the United States Information Agency and other private and public actors, the Western woman was epitomized as the agent of prosperous consumption in a domestic setting, not as a producer of goods.[11] The AFL-CIO International Affairs Department was as captivated by this stereotype as any other Cold War mythmaker.

However, the AFL-CIO's recalcitrance to contribute to ICFTU initiatives and to the Women's Committee, their disparaging "it's-not-worth-the-expense" attitude appears also symptomatic of a short-sighted lack of perceptiveness on issues that other Western union centers saw more clearly, and that would come to haunt the labor movement soon after the period Richards is considering. Rather than simply reluctant to deal with an issue that would question their authority and change the context in which they operated, AFL-CIO leaders seem utterly unable to grasp the very relevance of one of the major challenges then facing the labor movement.

The timeframe of course matters, and we ought to contextualize. In the mid-1960s, the world of labor was at the tail end of an era in which it had been, and above all had been represented as, dominated by manufacturing and particularly by heavy industry. The image of work, and especially of the unionized worker, was more solidly and iconically male than ever before or after. Mining, steelmaking, and car manufacturing were a male and indeed a macho landscape. However, not every labor center was so blindfolded, prejudiced, or imprisoned by its own rhetoric, as Richards' story makes clear. When faced with issues such as part-time work and the whole range of demographic shifts and cultural upheavals that were just about to explode across the West, the AFL-CIO leadership was simply in denial. By the mid-1970s, the federation was to be riven by open conflict on gender issues.

* * *

Most of this book's essays explore the expansion of international labor politics in the Asian, African, and Latin American countries that in the 1950s and 1960s became engulfed in the global Cold War. It is in dealing with these

cases—fraught with the unresolved tensions between nationalism, anticommunism, and neutralism—that this new literature is most original and innovative.

As many other American analysts in the early postwar period, the AFL leaders understood that a clear discontinuity with empire was necessary if Western positions and ideas were to retain an influence in the areas of anticolonial insurgency. Edmund F. Wehrle, Jr., in his essay, *"Free Labor versus Slave Labor": Free Trade Unionism and the Challenge of War-Torn Asia*, aptly quotes Irving Brown's warning about the poisoned legacy of colonialism: "Unless we break with the past in Indonesia, in Indo-China, in South Africa . . . there will be no hope for maintaining what is left of Asia" (p. 257) Anticolonial sympathies had deep—although not always predominant—roots in the tradition of the American labor movement.[12] In the postwar period, they were reinforced by a deeply felt aversion toward British and French imperial élites and a correspondingly inflated perception of America's mission. As soon as the United States framed its response to the Chinese revolution and war in Korea in terms of anti-Communist containment, however, anti-imperialism acquired a much more complex and contradictory complexion, first in Asia and then elsewhere. Third World nationalism would soon present a set of difficult challenges to "free" trade unionism's international culture and politics.

In the rapidly expanding Cold War mindset that viewed local conflicts and tensions through the lens of a rigid bipolar antagonism, neutralism soon became the intractable problem for "free" trade unionism. Promoting or aiding independent unions meant that anti-Communist objectives could not always remain paramount. Policy choices dictated by anti-Communist priorities, on the other hand, often disregarded the actual priorities pursued by local actors and undermined the possibility of gaining substantial traction with them. These essays explore the nuances of this dilemma, which the AFL-CIO was never truly able to resolve, even though the cases considered show a variety of attitudes and responses.

Mathilde von Bülow's *Irving Brown and ICFTU Labor Diplomacy during Algeria's Struggle for Independence, 1954–1962* illustrates a case of positive synergy between the AFL-CIO's support for the nationalist labor federation UGTA and the cause of Algerian independence. At issue here was not so much the danger of an expanding Communist presence but rather the possibility of uncontrolled radicalization and loss of influence if the West appeared to solidly back French resistance to liberation, which also entailed the suppression of labor rights. Thus, Irving Brown could merge his anticolonial (and anti-French) inclination with his labor sympathies without being constrained, or derailed, by anti-Communist considerations. He worked with the UGTA and was influential in achieving its affiliation to the ICFTU, which helped the movement to break out of its isolated, underground existence. International recognition, with all its moral and institutional implications, did in turn sustain the union's efforts in support not only of its members but also of the Algerians' determination to fight for their national liberation. It is therefore a case that highlights, in the microcosm of international labor politics, the dynamics of the foreign policy of national liberation that were so crucial for Algerian independence.[13]

In Robert Anthony Waters, Jr.'s' *More Subtle than We Knew: The AFL in the British Caribbean,* the tension between anticolonialism and the imperative of

anticommunism plays out in a different way, with ad hoc decisions, no small dose of paternalist condescension from the AFL side, and also the ability to accept the priority of nationalism while trying to direct it onto a more acceptable language of anticommunism. In British Guiana, anticommunism drove the AFL to side with the colonial power's repression. In British Honduras, on the other hand, genuine anticolonialism, deep-rooted anti-British feelings, and perhaps proud Americanism induced AFL envoy Serafino Romualdi to put aside the reflexive anticommunism of his leaders. He understood that the People's United Party and General Workers' Union leaders were not a potential tool for Communist penetration, no matter how seditious the British considered them. Romualdi deemed their radicalism "childish and harmful to unionized workers" (p. 173) and tried to temper it, but did not conflate anticolonial nationalism with anticommunism. Thus, the AFL and the GWU built up a collaboration that probably helped the latter to remain within the orbit of the ORIT rather than siding with the WFTU, even though it is still difficult to assess the extent of the cultural and political influence exercised by the AFL.

However, not every lower-level official or envoy was capable of steering the AFL-CIO's leadership away from its rigid template of anti-Communist alignment, as made clear by John C. Stoner's study on Ghana, *"We Will Follow a Nationalist Policy; but We Will Never Be Neutral": American Labor and Neutralism in Cold War Africa, 1957–1962*. When the fight for independence took off in Africa, the United States was struggling with the prospect of nonalignment inaugurated at Bandung. Within the rigid Cold War binaries that prevailed in Washington, neutralism was seen with deep suspicion, and ultimately considered untenable. Even though the Soviets had little actual leverage in Africa, the US government and most AFL-CIO leaders could not overcome their fear that African nationalism and pan-African ideologies could ultimately weaken the West in the overall balance of Cold War influence. African American unionists like A. Philip Randolph, Maida Springer Kemp, and George McCray were able to see through the haze of Cold War ideology (and racist beliefs) and proposed to engage an open dialogue with pan-African and nationalist ambitions, whose thrust they thought should be accepted rather than ostracized by the West, particularly by trade unions. However, uncertainty and fear over the potential direction of anticolonial independence remained dominant in Washington, and eventually led to a direct challenge to pan-Africanism under the guise of modernization projects meant to propel the newly independent countries toward an explicitly Western pattern of development.

In Africa, as in the Vietnam case studied by Edmund Wehrle, the AFL-CIO eventually decided that its place was within the modernization compact with state and business proposed by the United States Agency for International Development. Unionism had to adapt to it rather than maintain an autonomous role for the sake of the global bipolar struggle between Western democracy and Soviet communism. What is perhaps most striking is that US development policies appear to have been accepted at face value by the AFL-CIO as an integrated recipe within which unionists should simply play a subsidiary function—mostly in training and labor education—without a role and a strategy of their own. Rather than questioning the type of development that might better serve wage earners, the AFL-CIO equated progress with Western-inspired modernization even though the latter offered little

prospect for independent national growth or even for bread-and-butter collective bargaining. The prospect of modernization and democratization would prove to be a chimera in Vietnam and elsewhere. Among its many victims, we have to list also the "free" trade unionism of several countries where the AFL-CIO strategy could not bridge the gulf between independent trade unionism and Western strategic and ideological priorities.

These essays provide a significant contribution to our understanding of the local politics of modernization and the AFL-CIO's attitude toward it. They highlight the complexity involved in the "break with the [colonial] past" that Irving Brown—like many others in the United States—deemed necessary first in Asia and then in Africa as pressures for independence built up and decolonization rolled on. They also stimulate us to consider the degree of adaptability, or lack thereof, of the AFL-CIO's foreign activities and conceptions over the long term. Their principled hostility to government-labor cooperation—a key marker of "free" trade unionism—had to be continually compromised in contexts where it seemed hardly sustainable to begin with, and then became utterly unrealistic in the new nation-building phase that followed independence. We should wonder (and above all study) whether there was a sort of learning curve and adaptation process, perhaps prompted by, or self-justified with, a racial- or cultural-difference argument on the diversity between "advanced" and "backward" countries. We might of course find out that AFL-CIO leaders simply accepted compromise as a pure necessity dictated by their understanding of Cold War imperatives, much as democracy could be cynically compromised for the sake of Western stability, but we are approaching the critical mass of case studies that will make possible to trace and conceptualize change over time.

These essays point also toward another area of investigation that future research should explore in depth if we want to grasp the actual reach of the Cold War dynamics in the global South and expand our knowledge of international labor's role in it. In the immediate postwar period, American unionists had projected on Western Europe a model of industrial relations and labor strategy derived from their New Deal experience. Its basic premise was that collective bargaining would integrate wage earners in an economy of rising income and consumption, and therefore make industrial workers a key, constructive participant in the democratic polity. Strengthened and disseminated in Western Europe by the Marshall Plan, this doctrine was not always immediately successful but it had considerable influence on those highly industrialized societies whose similarities with the United States endowed that vision with a degree of consistency, legitimacy, and credibility. But could this model serve also as a template in the very different contexts of Asia or Africa? How did US unionists approach the political economy of Ghana, Algeria, Vietnam, or Indonesia when waging their battles for "free" trade unionism?

If it is clear that they looked at labor politics as a crucial ground for the ideological battle for hearts and minds, the economic analysis and strategy that they envisioned is much less evident. Did they simply (and inconsistently) carry into the "Third World" the same economic culture with which they had approached Western Europe? To what extent did they adapt their analyses and recipes to the

different social structures and economic geographies they encountered in the new nations they tried to deal with? How did they translate their notions of productivity, efficiency, and collective bargaining in agricultural economies primarily geared to commodity trading?

By the late 1950s, when modernization theories engendered aid policies aimed at furthering a predetermined model of ascent through "stages of growth," those questions received an internally consistent if highly unrealistic answer. US labor seems to have bought into the concept without truly questioning its validity, or its desirability for labor unions, but we still know very little about the economic assumptions that drove such a choice. We need to research into these issues—not only to achieve a fuller understanding of the culture and politics of US labor's international activities, but also to approach the effective presence, role, and relevance of labor unions in the societies that moved toward independence. The history of international labor could, and in my opinion should, also serve as a window into the processes of transition toward independent, postcolonial regimes whose political economy still remains too opaque in historical scholarship.

Such investigation could provide innovative and fruitful inroads into the various grounds touched by this type of research (global vs. local Cold War dynamics, scope and relevance of transnational interactions, international labor politics, conflicts around political economy in the global South), as the essays on Latin America make abundantly clear. Quite symptomatically, they all emphasize the centrality of the domestic context and the local actors' agency. The latter's congruity with the international battle lines appears fragmented and ultimately rather limited. Thus, these essays question the geographical and conceptual boundaries of the Cold War. They urge us to consider whether the Cold War had a substantially different nature in those areas, and therefore whether the Cold War paradigm is at all useful as an analytical tool.

It does not really apply to Argentina, where—as Dustin Walcher's *Reforming Latin American Labor: The AFL-CIO and Latin America's Cold War* convincingly argues—the liberal road to modernization was held at bay by different projects and practices deeply ingrained in national history. The AFL-CIO anticipated that the Alliance for Progress' imagined path to a mass consumption society could assure Latin American workers the "benefits of modernity . . . in the same way that the New Deal order provided a share of benefits to workers in the United States" (p. 131). However, in several Latin American nations, and most decidedly in Argentina, labor confederations were deeply integrated in the state and joined with political parties. "Given the historic marginalization of workers throughout the region, many Latin American laborers were happy to trade autonomy in exchange for a heightened degree of economic security and guaranteed access to the corridors of power. Such benefits were difficult to overstate" (p. 132). Apparently, they were also very difficult for the AFL-CIO leaders to grasp, or accept. They saw the Alliance proposal as "an answer to populist, Socialist, and Communist challenges to liberal hegemony" (p. 131) but their "uncompromising, with-us-or-against-us approach" (p. 132) exasperated ideological polarization without offering them any substantial traction. To the extent that it did, anticommunism played out as a domestic rather than an international element. Flexibility and adaptability (not to

mention a deeper respect for local democracy) would have actually worked better than a preconceived model and ideal types. The Argentinian might very well be a peculiar case, but when read alongside the other papers it seems less a unique deviation than an extreme example of the fact that labor ideology, strategy, and policies by and large are not universal, but indeed very site-specific.

Magaly Rodríguez García's *The AFL-CIO and ORIT in Latin America's Andean Region, from the 1950s to the 1960s*, surveys the Andean region. Here too local actors appear as the prime mover. Their agreement with US positions—when present—could not be automatically read as alignment, much less subordination, while their disagreements were evidence of an independent, if not critical, stance toward the northern neighbors. Her conclusion that the options taken by the Andean leaders—including their relations with the ORIT and the ICFTU—responded to their reading of their own interests much more than to external pressures, is a much more sensible and realistic paradigm than the opposite one that too often informs studies on the interface between national and international in the Cold War era. Anticommunism played a role, at least as a language that connected various international partners, "but it was by no means the sole motivation for inter-American labor co-operation" (p. 154). As she concludes, "Affiliation to the ORIT and the ICFTU responded to the interests of the Andean workers' organizations and not to the pressure exerted by the US unions . . . the relationship between the US unions, the ORIT and workers' organizations from the Andes region was more symmetrical than is generally accepted" (pp. 154, 155). We should not hasten to elevate her conclusion to a new axiom of universal validity, but a similar reasoning resonates also in Angela Vergara's essay on *Chilean Workers and the US Labor Movement: From Solidarity to Intervention, 1950s–1970s*. She pushes the argument even further: "Moving between rejection, uncommitted support, and enthusiasm, Latin American labor actors manipulated the anti-Communist discourse, and negotiated and obtained some economic and political resources from US labor unions, ORIT, and US diplomatic services . . . Shaped by international, continental, and national politics, Latin American unions adapted to and contested these international forces" (p. 202). In particular, here we see the tensions created by the AIFLD projects for modernization onto which American labor in the early 1960s tried to hitch a ride. Appealing to American business in order to foster investments and spread a managerial culture "created a strong resistance from local unions" (p. 209), and despite the massive effort, "US influence on its labor movement remained extremely limited" (p. 210).

There is a methodological lesson in these successful efforts at exploring complexity rather than simplifying it along the lines of the stylized picture that most US actors drew at the time. And there is also a core argument on the inherent inconsistency of modernization programs purportedly aimed at development and democracy but necessarily premised upon collaboration with institutional and economic forces that pursued corporatism rather than contractualism, disciplinarian top-down control rather than democratization, and capital accumulation rather than wage increases. Perhaps no case illustrates this conundrum more vividly than the Brazilian one studied by Larissa Rosa Corrêa's essay on *"Democracy and Freedom" in Brazilian Trade Unionism during the Civil-Military Dictatorship:*

The Activities of the American Institute for Free Labor Development. Here, a military regime strategically joined to the United States government by a close alliance refused to accept the American recipe for a contractualist system of labor relations. It rejected a model of independent collective bargaining even though such a choice carried the price of an open friction with its main ally. "The Brazilian generals were not willing to 'sell the farm,' so to speak. On several occasions, the Brazilian government promised to consider the American trade unionists' requests; however, in the end the generals did the exact opposite of what the Americans' labor leadership expected" (p. 195). And they got away with it. In this clash between contrasting agendas, it was the AIFLD's that succumbed to the ultimate power and authority of the local government, and to the imbalance between the relatively strong position of US corporate investors and the much weaker one of US labor. Thus, Brazilian labor suffered the most, being the more vulnerable partner, and AFL-CIO participation became an exercise in frustration.

In conclusion, these essays prod us to explore the broader issue of the actual meaning and contours of the Cold War in the Latin American context, and to question the validity of broadly held assumptions. Was Latin America just one among many theaters of a global, unitary Cold War whose dynamics were determined by the bipolar rivalry, with the two superpowers manipulating and reshaping local conditions? Or was it rather an area partially separated from the global fault line, where conflicts had domestic roots and local agency mattered far more than the international Cold War, whose languages and alignments were instrumentally deployed and exploited as tools for inherently national struggles?[14]

I am obviously exaggerating the distinction between these two alternatives for the sake of clarity. There was a complex interrelationship based on a web of interactions, but transnational connections, influences, and exchanges cannot be forced into a unilateral, mono-dimensional pattern. Our studies will grow more insightful, rigorous, and beneficial if we abandon, once and for all, the implicit and at times explicit assumption of a sort of iron cage superimposed by the Cold War's global antagonism on local dynamics and conflicts. At the end of the day, what these essays tell us is that when we start from the local, and focus on its umpteen variations, we end up constructing a richer, genuinely historical, and more penetrating picture of what the Cold War was in the international history of the twentieth century, of its complex and multiple refractions, and of the many dynamics that were simply not part of the Cold War.

Notes

1. Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1969).
2. Roy Godson, *American Labor and European Politics: The AFL As a Transnational Force* (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976); Philip Taft, *Defending Freedom: American Labor and Foreign Affairs* (Los Angeles: Nash Pub., 1973).
3. Anthony Carew, "The Schism within the World Federation of Trade Unions: Government and Trade-Union Diplomacy," *International Review of Social History* 29 (1984); Anthony Carew, *Labour Under the Marshall Plan* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987);

Ronald L. Filippelli, *American Labor and Postwar Italy, 1943–1954* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989); Denis MacShane, *International Labour and the Origins of the Cold War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Federico Romero, *The United States and the European Trade Union Movement, 1944–1951*. Trans. Harvey Fergusson (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Peter Weiler, "The United States, International Labor, and the Cold War: the Breakup of the World Federation of Trade Unions," *Diplomatic History* 5 (1981).

4. Among the main works that defined that historiographical context see Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Charles Maier, "The Politics of Productivity: Foundation of American International Economic Policy After World War II," *International Organization* 31 (1977); Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945–51* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).
5. The key references here are Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). An insightful discussion of Cold War studies' current achievements and predicaments is offered by Holger Nehring, "What Was the Cold War?" *The English Historical Review* 127 (2012).
6. Among the most relevant works at the intersection between Cold War scholarship and postcolonial history, see Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Sergey Radchenko, eds., *The End of the Cold War and the Third World: New Perspectives on Regional Conflict* (London: Routledge, 2011); Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Gilbert Joseph and Daniela Spencer, *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Jana Lipman, *Guantánamo. A Working-Class History between Empire and Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009); "Special Forum: 'Workers, Labor, and War: New Directions in the History of American Foreign Relations," in *Diplomatic History* 34 (2010).
7. In the burgeoning literature on modernization theories applied to the Cold War rivalry, see Michael E. Latham, *Modernization As Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); David C. Engerman and Corinna Unger, "Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization" *Diplomatic History* 33 (2009); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Jeffrey F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2007); S.V. Mazov, *A Distant Front in the Cold War: The USSR in West Africa and the Congo, 1956–1964* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2010).
8. For sound scholarly analyses of the connections between the AFL-CIO and the CIA, see Anthony Carew, "The American Labor Movement in Fizzland: The Free Trade Union Committee and the CIA," *Labor History* 39 (1998), and Quenby Olmsted Hughes, *In the Interest of Democracy: The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011).

9. See Anders Stephanson, "Liberty or Death: The Cold War As US Ideology," in *Reviewing the Cold War,* ed., Odd Arne Westad (London: Frank Cass, 2000).
10. On European trade unions, see Idesbald Goddeeris, *Solidarity with Solidarity: Western European Trade Unions and the Polish Crisis, 1980–1982* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010). For a different interpretation of détente in Europe, see Poul Villaume and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *Perforating the Iron Curtain: European Détente, Transatlantic Relations, and the Cold War, 1965–1985* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2010).
11. See Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance Through Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, eds., *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008).
12. Elizabeth McKillen, *Chicago Labor and the Quest for a Democratic Diplomacy, 1914–1924*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).
13. See Connelly.
14. For different perspectives on these possible conceptualizations, see Greg Grandin and Gilbert M. Joseph, eds., *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America's Long Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

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