

At least one large national association of artisans—the electrotypers—have recently established a uniform selling price for the product on which they work. With both the wages to be paid by the employer, and the prices which he may charge for his product fully determined by group action—and virtually by the organized labor group it will be admitted that a radically new industrial situation will have been created. The field for "Consent" will have been materially widened.

Everyone seems convinced that we are on the threshold of some very considerable readjustments in our American industrial world. It is entirely possible that present tendencies may become emphasized. But it seems equally possible that organized labor will in the immediate future discover the futility of some of the remedies which are being pushed today with the utmost enthusiasm—administration by groups rather than by individuals among the number.

Perhaps the most obvious mechanism of group action in industry—as it is in government—is the committee. My views on committee management have been fairly adequately expressed in "Academic and Industrial Efficiency," published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. But there are two additional points that should be made. In almost every instance which has come to my attention in which a committee in a factory was supposed to have full responsibility it had in reality very little. A shop committee has responsibility only when it pleases those who hold the purse strings to let it have its way. A committee may decide 999 things out of 1,000, but the fact that the members of the committee are kept from deciding the last one, and of course the critical one, keeps them from having the same kind of responsibility which the owner of a business has. Authority with such a string to it is not what is really meant by "Consent." Employers should not flatter themselves that workingmen confuse committee control with genuine industrial democracy. It is of the essence of democracy whether political or industrial that it shall be motivated from below and not dictated from the top.

Under any reasonably modern or discerning attitude toward industry it must be conceded that in those things we do and in which we ask the worker's co-operation we must have his permission or "Consent." But care must be taken to see that in freely granting this contention we do not appear to be advocating something that is unthinkable. No surgeon for instance would operate on Samuel Gompers for appendicitis without the latter's permission. But once having secured Mr. Gompers' "Consent" no reputable practitioner would permit him to dictate as to instruments or methods. In thus placing himself in the hands of this type of expert surely Mr. Gompers

does not feel that he compromises in any way his independence.

All workers from the top to bottom are entitled to essentially the same treatment and consideration. I wish the opportunity to say, whether I will or will not. I cannot logically deny this to any one else. Nietzsche says, "Whoever has inflicted upon you the law from without has degraded your moral individuality." It is not desirable to have a man do a thing merely because I tell him to do it. Obedience is rather a primitive virtue. I wish my associates to assume that I am sincere in wanting them to do only those things which they elect to do after as full an acquaintance with the facts as the conditions under which the work must be done makes possible. It very rarely occurs that things fail of the doing on account of this attitude. In other words "consent" may be interpreted as something larger than the opportunity to vote on each individual problem. Perhaps someone asks what we are to do with the so-called malcontent and kicker. An inquiry as to why such a one is discontented might develop the answer to the question. But even if it does not, I am not sure that any work shop is not better for an occasional disgruntled employee. They are not so disposed every hour in the day. The task of winning them puts everybody on guard. One or two cats are not undesirable in a work room, although it will be admitted that too many members of the feline family might interfere with the even flow of the work.

Is "Consent" in reality always a collective matter—does it always involve group action or can it on occasion become a matter of the individual entirely? May we with safety allow this individual "Consent" to apply broadly to a field involving not one, but an indefinite number of decisions? Similarly, may it not be possible to make individual "Consent" operate not only for the moment but throughout a period of time during which many decisions will be reached? These do not seem to be concessions antagonistic to a proper self-respect on the part of the individual worker, nor to the solidarity of the working classes nor in fact to the maximum of industrial freedom and democracy. But these conditions are vitally essential if we are to develop genuine American Efficiency. Each day the discoveries and developments of science make the opposite course increasingly unthinkable. It is hard enough today to keep pace with the possibilities of progress with functionalized management, which of course means the leaving of final decisions in each function to one rather than to a group. But in the immediate future it is going to be very much more difficult. You will recall Mr. Taylor's prophecy that within two generations there would be 50,000 books on industry for every one we have today. Hugo Munsterberg says in "Psychology and Industrial Efficiency"—"In a large manufacturing establishment

the manager assured me only recently that more than half a million different acts have to be performed in order to complete the goods of that factory." This may have been an exaggeration, but I know of no industry where the operations are not in the hundreds of thousands. To hold that we can permit every move in an industrial plant to be submitted to a vote simply shows a lack of understanding of the Game of Industry.

The cause of popular rule in this country and elsewhere seems to depend upon the correct decision as to this broad question of the group versus the individual. The system demanding one king gives way to a system of many kings—kings of the counter, kings of the lathe and loom—all kings, but only by virtue of superior knowledge. They know. But the reign of each is dependent upon the general acceptance of the individual's right to decide on facts and conditions. Our progress and even our security seem to lie in having the vast majority of judgments rendered by the informed individual.

Should we not learn in every relation in life to follow the lead of the particular individual who is charged with any given function, whether he be the President of the United States, the traffic officer, or the clerk in the office? We must not only follow these leads, but use our influence to have others do the same. On the other hand, should we not train ourselves to perform one or more functions so efficiently as to command the respect and loyalty, and reasonably willing service of those upon whose support we are dependent for success in the accomplishment of the work in hand, the earning of our livelihood and whatever success we are to achieve? I personally wish to live in a world where it is possible for me to conduct myself along these lines and in which everybody else shall have the same opportunity. This will never be possible in a world run by shop committees or determining boards, or even by labor unions, especially if the latter are so organized that everything has to be decided by group action. Both as affecting the individual and the nation, the development of real democracy depends upon utilizing the high power of individual action, coupled with all the safeguards that can be erected through appeal, investigation and review, and the freest possible publication of results, with final action based on the judgment of the governed.

I do not wish to have any misunderstanding about my attitude towards the responsibilities and the rights of individual employees. I believe that the *most important function of management* is to develop within the factory an educational system designed to get every employee "going from within so that he will run himself" in order that he may gradually assume a larger and larger share in the general conduct of the business. "We want all along the line," to quote

H. B. Drury, "not only men who can do what they are told to do, but men who can do things we would never think of ourselves. We want men who have enough interest, and education, and experience and boldness, to make positive contributions to the intelligence and vigor of the work." This requires something more than lip service and hand service. It means head service and heart service.

To ask committees, however, to pass constantly on matters about which by the very nature of things they can have at best a minimum of information, is like giving unbridled liberty to a boy because you want to make a man of him. It is demoralizing to any man to be given the opportunity to deliberate and to decide on matters where he is without sufficient education and special preparation and an adequate fact basis, for a scientific decision. I believe in advisory committees, but in each function of the administration the final decision must be made by the individual. Nothing must tend to prevent that individual from making decisions whenever in his judgment the time to decide has arrived. Decisions must be open to the fullest possible investigation and review—to be followed by a reversal of the decisions if the facts reinterpreted so dictate.

There is one fact connected with industry which requires special consideration. Very few people, either in the labor ranks or out of them, really wish to assume or are able to assume broad responsibilities. The work of the future will be to teach people to be eager to assume responsibility and to co-operate effectually. And this cannot be brought about unless the worker is inspired with joy in his task. Hereafter the Captain, whether of industry or of government, will necessarily be the man who loves, and loving, understands, and understanding, builds and leads and inspires great numbers of his fellows.

Since the discussion of the eight-hour day for railroad employees became acute we have heard a good deal about the possibilities of relief from such situations through wage boards and industrial commissions. To advocate any such regulating agency in this field at the present time is simply to say, "Let George do it." It is not a solution. Let me quote four typical and random paragraphs from recent orders* of the New South Wales Industrial Commission to give you an idea how industrial regulation by commission works:

- a. If the work required of them is not in accordance with the general custom of the trade, and is not covered by the definition in clause 8 of the award the drivers cannot be compelled to do the loading and unloading.

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*The New South Wales Industrial Gazette issued (monthly) by the Dept. of Labor and Industry—Vol. x, No. 4, August, 1916, pages 685, 721, 845, and 872.