

Leaflet No. 7

THE One Big Union



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A Historical Sketch

WHY THE O.B.U. STARTED.

Much has been said as to WHY and HOW the O.B.U. came into existence, not only by the various A. F. of L. leaders, but also by the Kept Press, which makes it necessary that we again place before the workers a short review of the developments leading up to the birth of the organization.

— CONDITIONS DURING THE WAR YEARS

In spite of the fact that during the period of the great war the labor market was most favorable to the workers (which is amply proven by the fact that the government found it necessary to pass an Order-in-Council authorizing the jailing of any working man found at large without a job) the workers in Western Canada were forced to combine their forces in order to gain a few cents per hour increase in wages. In substantiation of this we draw to your attention the General Sympathetic Strike in Vancouver, B.C.; Edmonton, Alberta; Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Calgary, Alberta, during the years 1917 and 1918. Such combined action on the part of the workers, as above cited, was necessary even when the labor market was most favorable, and without it the workers could not have brought the various disputes to a successful conclusion.

THE LESSON LEARNED

The lesson learned by the workers in Western Canada from these events forced them to bring resolutions before the Trades Congress of Canada Convention, in the city of Quebec, in September, 1918, calling upon the Congress to take a referendum vote on Industrial Unionism. The following resolution,