

belonged to the same unions as their American fellow-workers. Their unwritten motto was in many cases, "The same employer; the same union."

The participation of Canadians in international unions on a continental basis has assumed such large-scale proportions that policy decisions by the unions affect many people in Canada as well as in the United States. Policy is laid down at annual or biennial conventions to which the local unions of both countries send delegates representing the membership. Policies affecting workers in both countries are arrived by majority decision.

It comes about, therefore, that a local union in Canada will be following a policy similar to that of a local unit of the same international union perhaps three thousand miles away in the United States. In the earlier days of international trades unions on the continent, union policies largely ranged around improvement of the immediate conditions of life. Betterment of wages and working conditions, known to unionists as "bread and butter problems", was the chief motivation for union activity.

With the improvement of wages and conditions, however, came a greater social awakening of union membership, and international union policy broadened out into new areas of interest. The enactment of social legislation began to absorb the attention of unionists, and it may be said that much of the social legislation in the statutes of Canada and the United States had its origins in the discussions in local union halls and the conventions of international unions. The adherence of close to a million Canadians to international unions has, therefore, considerable influence on the political and economic life of Canada.

A Personal Relationship

This mass form of Canadian activity in international unions has something more than economic or political implications. It has created a personal relationship that brings together on a day-to-day basis a fellowship of tens of thousands of people of Canada and the United States, thereby enriching the life of the two countries and making for mutual understanding of each other's problems. In this fellowship lies a great contribution to the continuing peace between the two neighbours. North America is something of a continental economic unit. Because of this, it is easy to understand why Canadians of many interests join with their fellows in the United States in mutual organization.

What is not so easy to grasp is the interest and activity of Canadian unionists in world organizations and in their numerous regional or subsidiary bodies. Yet Canadian unions have had a participation of years standing in the bona fide organizations of world trade unionism. The motivation of Canadian activity in world trade unionism is basically similar to that of joint activity with United States workers. It is mutually of interest and purpose, backed by a realization that, directly or indirectly, what happens in any part of the globe has some sort of impact on the lives of Canadians generally, and Canadian workers in particular.

Canadian workers are affiliated to two world labour organizations. Canadian unions with international connections in the United States are associated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. The unions in the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour are affiliated with the International Confederation of Christian Trade Unions.