Management and pliant union officials were not shy about entering into such partnerships; the machinists tripled their membership in six years and at least part of that gain must have been the result of corporate "preference." The companies, in effect, were choosing "safe" unions and "safe" union leaders to represent their employes, just as they had chosen them in the 1920s when outright company unionism was rampant.

But of even greater significance in rolling back the labor revolution of the 1930s was the institutionalization of the collective bargaining process. It amounted to a trade-off by which labor's leadership was given a measure of security in return for curbing the militancy of the rank and file.

Management had fiercely resisted the 1935 Wagner Act, but ultimately discovered that it could be turned to important advantage. In the past, thousands of strikes had been waged simply to win collective bargaining rights; now these could be secured simply by petitioning the National Labor Relations Board for an election. If the union won a simple majority, the corporation was mandated to recognize it and enter into negotiations on wages and working conditions. This gave unions and their officials a measure of stability, and usually was painless for management, at least in the major industries, because the additional costs could be passed on to the consumer through administered prices.

The institutionalization of industrial relations did not penetrate everywhere, of course; many industries—textiles, for instance — continued their bitter resistance to unionization. Nor did the new "labor peace" mean an end to strikes. But the tone of industrial relations changed. As *Fortune* magazine observed about the 1946 strike wave in which 4.5 million workers hit the bricks: "The strikers . . . were not desperate men. On the public platform their leaders sounded off with booming phrases directed at the enemy Capital; but privately they, like the strikers, were calm, cool, even friendly warriors."

There is no doubt that millions of union members reaped considerable material benefits from the trade-off of security for moderation. But there were at least two over-riding negative results. One was the divorce between the labor leadership and the rank and file. As the time-span of contracts increased from one year to two or three or even more, it was no longer necessary for officers to consult the members so often. The union shop (which requires all employes to join the union within thirty days of employment) and the dues checkoff further strengthened what was rapidly becoming a labor establishment, but reduced contact between the individual member and top officials.

"When anti-unionism was abandoned in the 1940s and 1950s by significant segments of American industry," George Brooks of Cornell University has written, "a new world was created for the unions. For it now turned out that the imperative requirements of the union, that regular flow of new members and dues, could be underwritten by the *employer* with considerably more reliability than was possible under earlier arrangements."

This very security, however, made the union chiefs sluggish. Even in the more militant unions, the interval between conventions was extended from a year to two years, then three years, and in some instances four years or more. Factionalism tapered off, since it was difficult to sustain an opposition group for the longer periods. Thus, in one union after another, internal ferment was replaced by relative calm, and as the leadership became more entrenched, rank-and-file checks and balances dwindled to the vanishing point.