

Human Values

I see no harm in power, if it is power dedicated to human values, if it is power for good—and that is what the trade union movement seeks.

Obviously, concentration of power in the hands of a few can be dangerous to the general welfare. But when unions become more powerful, it means that the people of this country become more powerful. It is merely a practical application of the basic principle of democracy.

Our forefathers meant it to be that way. They believed that the enjoyment of freedom depended upon rule by the great masses of citizens. They were against monopoly of power by the wealthy. They were against monopoly of power by the military. They were against monopoly of power by the aristocracy. They were convinced that the free way of life could be safeguarded only when power over the economic, social and political life of our country was **shared** by the many. That is exactly what the trade union movement has tried over the years to bring about.

Let us look back a bit to the time when the trade union movement had very little power but consistently used what power it possessed to advance causes of benefit to all the American people.

When Samuel Gompers and his associates lobbied in the state legislatures and the national Congress for an 8-hour day, was their purpose to degrade the worker? When they campaigned for universal free education, was their objective to exploit the worker? When they battled for workmen's compensation laws were they trying to injure the interests of the American people? When they fought for union recognition and free collective bargaining, were they trying to create new millionaires at the expense of those who worked for wages?

Or was it to make life better for the worker, to obtain for him a larger share of the wealth he helped to produce, to give him greater purchasing power so that American industry and American agriculture could find a ready market for their rapidly growing productive capacity?

The record shows—beyond contradiction—that from its very inception the trade union movement has consistently used whatever power it had to raise the American standard of living, to promote the interests of all the American people and to enhance the power and prestige of the nation as a whole.

Yes, the record is clear. It proves that the trade union movement has always been in the forefront of all action—whether in the shop, in the