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## The Trade Union Movement in Sweden\*

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*The history of trade unionism in Sweden ultimately goes back to the first efforts to obtain industrial freedom in 1846. It was not, however, until 1880 that a large number of unions were formed. The work of federating these unions proceeded from about 1890 onwards, with the result that some controversy arose as to whether the principle of the craft or the industry should prevail in organisation. The problem has not been entirely solved, but an important scheme was drawn up in 1912 by a Committee of the National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions. This scheme, based on the industrial principle, has been in part carried out, though it has met with some resistance. Thus, in spite of the incomplete homogeneity in the structure of the movement, a tendency towards reorganisation on industrial lines is traceable. At the head of the whole movement is the National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions. A demand for decentralisation has led to the formation also of an opposition organisation, the Central Organisation of Swedish Workers.*

*The relations between trade unionism and the Socialist movement in Sweden has always been close; these relations have gone through several phases, and, though there is now no longer any absolutely formal connection, continue very friendly in spite of some efforts made from the Syndicalist and Communist side to obtain a more complete dissociation.*

**B**EFORE the days of modern capitalism Swedish industry, which existed only in the form of handicrafts, was organised on a system resembling that of the German guilds. Employers combined to form masters' companies with the co-operation and under the supervision of the authorities, while the workers united in journeymen's companies or fraternities under the control not only of the authorities but also of the masters. The foundation of

\* The sources for this article are—

*Fackföreningsrörelsen. Account of similar Conditions in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, England, and France, together with Special Reports for Sweden. I, Sweden; III, Special Reports. Stockholm, 1912.*

*Sifferuppgifter och grafiska framställningar över Landsorganisationen och de svenska fackförbunden 1888-1912. [Statistics and Graphs relating to the*

the system was laid as far back as the fourteenth century, and for three hundred years the masters' companies flourished, and under their care the journeymen's fraternities.

The monopoly system to which the guilds gave rise finally produced a reaction which, towards the end of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, took the form of a series of fiscal measures intended to remove restrictions on the carrying on of different trades. The chief feature of prevailing social conditions was the increased difficulty experienced by the workers in earning their livelihood in trades to which they had been apprenticed; this slowly but surely wore away the very centre of the whole system of guilds, and when in 1846 the system was abolished it had already practically ceased to work.

The old-time handicrafts had long felt the disadvantageous effects of competition from factory industry both at home and abroad. The introduction of industrial freedom proclaimed in 1846 and established by a Statutory Order of 1864 made their position even worse, and the first to suffer from the disadvantages of

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*Federation of Trade Unions and the Swedish Trade Unions 1888-1912*. Stockholm, 1915.

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Sigfrid HANSSON: *Bidrag till den svenska fackföreningsrörelsens historia (Contribution to the History of the Swedish Trade Union Movement)*: (a) *The Swedish Union of Shoe and Leather Workers*, (b) *Swedish Union of Bakers and Confectioners*, (c) *Stockholm Bookbinders' Union 1872-1922*. Stockholm, 1920, 1921, 1922.

Sigfrid HANSSON: *Arbetarörelsen i Sverige (The Labour Movement in Sweden)*; an Historical, Technical, and Statistical Survey. Stockholm, 1922.

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Emil ANDERSSON: *Vad vill Fackliga propagandaförbundet? (What is the Object of the Trade Union Propaganda Federation?)*. Stockholm, 1921.

Karl KILBOM: *Revolutionär fackföreningsrörelse (The Revolutionary Trade Union Movement)*. Stockholm, 1920; and *Skraförbund eller klassorganisation? (Craft Unions or Class Organisation)*. Stockholm, 1920.

S. A. C. s handbok, *Rådgivare för organisationer och medlemmar (Handbook of the Central Organisation of Swedish Workers — Advice for Organisation and Members)*. Örebro, 1919.

*Sveriges arbetares centralorganisation byggd på lokala samorganisationer. (The Central Organisation of Swedish Workers on the Basis of Local Organisations)*. Malmö, 1914.

*Fackföreningsrörelsen (Organisation of the Federation of Trade Unions)*; Year I, Vols. I and II. Stockholm, 1921. Year II, Vols. I and II. Stockholm, 1922.

that industrial freedom were the workers in these trades. In spite of all defects, the old journeymen's companies had provided them with a certain amount of protection. They were now practically without it, abandoned to the effects of competition between the employers and stricken by economic conditions. Apart from the fact that the journeymen's companies in certain trades were transformed into sickness and funeral benefit funds, all organised co-operation between the workers ceased with the abolition of the guild system and the introduction of industrial freedom.

The serious results of this situation are illustrated by a statement made in 1840 by an economist who demanded " a new social organisation of industry and labour " for the purpose of " setting bounds to the otherwise inevitable increase in pauperism, proletarianisation, and demoralisation, and, by securing the livelihood of the worker and his family, of counteracting that dangerous anti-social feeling among the working classes " which in England and France " had revealed itself as an almost permanent conspiracy against the community and the institution of property " (1). This writer pointed to the trade union movement in England as a " bulwark against the arbitrariness and self-interest of capitalists ", yet he was clearly far from imagining that the new social organisation he desired for his own country would be built on the basis of such a movement.

As a general rule, the workers had little interest in that or similar movements abroad. They submitted to their hard fate and only gradually began to realise the need for co-operation on the basis of trade unionism. Unsatisfactory social conditions had no doubt led to earlier collective manifestations among the workers in certain trades and in individual cases, but the workers were not represented by any form of trade union organisation. In 1863, for instance, the dockers of Hålsingborg had conducted a short strike without any kind of organisation behind them. According to an official investigation undertaken in 1901, about ten similar strikes took place during the 'sixties. The number of strikes during the 'seventies was about 45, and only in a very few instances were the workers represented by trade organisations. Thus in 1873 the workers in Stockholm bakeries struck in order to obtain certain alleviations in night work, but they were not backed by a trade union in the modern sense of the term but by a so-called society of journeymen, the chief object of which was to provide sickness and funeral benefit. The first strike led by a trade union in Sweden is considered to be the strike of tinsmiths, which took place in Stockholm in 1883.

In some quarters attempts are made to place the origins of the Swedish trade union movement as far back as 1846, the year of the formation of the Stockholm Typographical Association

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(1) *Om Vigten och betydelsen af slöjder och manufaktur för en samhälle* (On the Importance and Value of Handicraft and Manufacture in a Community). Stockholm, 1840.

(*Typografiska föreningen*), which claims and is generally considered to be Sweden's first trade union. The point is, however, disputable, for the Association was originally nothing but a copy of the journeymen's company, which existed in the trade during the guild period, and was very little different from the sickness and funeral benefit funds which took the place of the journeymen's companies in other trades. The duties of the Association were to care for the "profit and entertainment" of their members and "reform the dissolute lives led by typographers at that time". Above all, the Association was to enable its members "by reading and other methods of intellectual education to render themselves worthy of the art exercised daily by the members of the society, an art which was of such high importance in the service of information". It was not until the end of the 'eighties and the beginning of the 'nineties that this Association acquired the characteristics of a modern trade union.

The next oldest Swedish trade union, the Union of Stockholm Bookbinders (*Bokbinderiarbetareföreningen*), was formed in 1872. This organisation, too, devoted itself at first mainly to the entertainment of its members and also acted as a sickness and funeral benefit fund. It retained this character until the end of the century, and only then entered on the usual activities of a trade union. Among the other trade unions founded in the 'seventies reference may be made to the Association of Hatters of Stockholm (*Hattmakarnes förening*) (1874) and the Union of Upholsterers of Stockholm (*Tapetserarefackföreningen*) (1876). In other trades a beginning was made with the foundation of unions in the 'eighties and 'nineties. During this period the principle of trade unionism gained most ground in the old handicraft trades.

Outside the working classes, however, there had long been considerable interest in the so-called labour question. Among the chief exponents of such interest were various persons of intellectual standing, the most important of whom was a physician, Anton Nyström by name. Workers' societies, formed chiefly for the purpose of promoting the intellectual education of the workers, had been founded as far back as the 'sixties by members of the middle classes and the most intellectually active workers. The influence of these societies was fairly important during the 'seventies and 'eighties. They arranged periodical labour conferences at which current social questions were discussed. These workers' societies and labour conferences were of importance to the trade union movement in so far as the more active workers were there able to acquire the practical knowledge needed for organising unions and the impulse towards liberalism which gradually gave the modern labour movement its particular outlook.

In this connection, reference should also be made to the so-called "ring" movement organised in the 'eighties. The movement originated with a wholesale spirits merchant named L. O. Smith, whose scheme was to organise a body to be entitled 'The Workers' Ring'. Among other aims, this organisation was "to work for fair and good relations between employers and workers,

so that strikes could be avoided by a spirit of accomodation on both sides". It was also to aim at bringing down the cost of living of the workers on co-operative lines. The members were thus "to combine and rent houses jointly so as to bring down the rent, meeting the rent charges regularly as their wages are paid". The society was to promote thrift by opposing the widespread system of buying on credit and by opening savings-banks. In his capacity as a dealer in spirits, the originator of the movement was greatly interested in the temperance question and the taxation of spirits, and among the items of his programme for the movement he included the following absurd provision: "The members in Stockholm should agree never to drink bottled beer but only draught, as the price would thereby be diminished by half". Strange to relate, this movement aroused considerable interest for some years, in some respects to the detriment of the trade union movement. Its ultimate failure was not least due to the fact that it was opposed by those members in the labour movement who were trying to win labour over for Socialism.

#### EARLY HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The general labour conferences referred to in the previous section gave an impulse towards the consolidation of the trade union movement in trade federations covering the whole country. Already in 1886 one of these conferences had drawn up principles of organisation for the trade union movement. These principles stated :

Organisations shall include both men and women workers in the same trade.

A trade union shall be formed in every place where there are at least ten workers carrying on the same trade.

These unions shall be brought into touch with similar unions in all other parts of the country and preferably also with corresponding unions abroad, so that a united whole may be achieved.

Funds shall be established for common local and international needs.

The trade unions were able to exercise a certain amount of influence at this conference, and even the Socialist section of the movement was represented, among others by the present Premier, Hjalmar Branting.

Some months later the first Scandinavian Labour Congress was held, at which the Socialists were predominant. This congress recommended the consolidation of the trade union movement in "centralised trade federations". The first trade union federation, the Swedish Federation of Typographers (*Svenska Typograförbundet*), was formed on 7 to 10 July 1886 and started work on 1 January 1887. On 10 October 1886 the subordinate employees of the Post Office formed a federation entitled Sweden's Postal Servants (*Sveriges Postbetjante*), later called the Swedish Postmen's Federation (*Svenska Postmannaförbundet*). Similar organisations came into being in certain trades during the 'eighties, but consolidation did not become general until the following decade,

largely because the work of organisation in many trades had scarcely begun before then or was limited to a few districts only. The trade union federations formed in the ' eighties and ' nineties were the following.

*Federations formed between 1880 and 1890*

Federations	Date of formation	Official membership
Typographers	7 July 1886	355
Postmen	8 Oct. 1886	75
Painters	2 Oct. 1887	800
Iron and metal workers	1 June 1888	551
Shoemakers	10 Sept. 1888	366
Woodworkers	26 June 1889	886
Tailors	16 Aug. 1889	405

*Federations formed between 1890 and 1900*

Federations	Date of formation	Official membership
Tobacco workers	5 June 1890	1,062
Glovers	12 Oct. 1890	115
Bricklayers	14 Dec. 1890	629
Tile makers	4 Jan. 1891	240
General and factory workers	1 Nov. 1891	419
Coopers	15 Jan. 1892	85
Bookbinders	18 Mar. 1893	356
Tinsmiths	30 July 1893	125
Moulders	28 Dec. 1893	389
Saddlers and upholsterers	2 Sept. 1894	70
Miners	12 Oct. 1895	600
Bakers and confectioners	25 July 1896	430
Ropemakers	1 Apr. 1897	100
Transport workers	18 Apr. 1897	2,570
Stonemasons	30 May 1897	1,480
Sawmill and timberyard workers	7 June 1897	1,183
Chemical workers	19 Dec. 1897	275
Leather workers	1 Mar. 1898	275
Glass workers	4 Dec. 1898	300
Textile workers	5 Apr. 1898	500
Pastrycooks	1 Jan. 1899	150
Brewers	22 Jan. 1899	1,121
Tramwaymen	25 Feb. 1899	450
Railwaymen	17 May 1899	500
Customs officials	28 July 1899	49

Thus by the end of the century 32 federations in all had been formed. As appears from the above list, with a few exceptions, consolidation had been effected in the old handicraft trades. The obvious reason for this is that support for the principles of trade unionism was found mainly among artisans. Trade unionism had only been accepted among the factory workers in a few cases, and was in the main unknown in agriculture and forestry; but even in the industries where it bore fruit it was chiefly the skilled workers who laid the foundation for the federations. Thus the trade unions which formed, for instance, the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation (*Järn- och metallarbetareförbundet*) consisted largely of moulders, tinsmiths, file cutters, and plumbers; the unskilled workers in the metal industry only began to organise

themselves towards the end of the century, and then, as a rule, they joined the Federation of General and Factory Workers (*Grov- och fabriksarbetareförbundet*). At about the same time the moulders and the tinsmiths separated from the metal workers and formed their federation on narrow craft lines.

The foundation of the General and Factory Workers' Federation was laid by unskilled workers in the building industry — builders' labourers, navvies, quarry workers — and by corresponding classes of workers in certain factory trades. Thus the first membership list of this federation includes a union of felt hat factory workers and a sugar factory workers' union, but it also includes a union of woodyard workers and a union of millers. Unskilled workers outside the factories were mainly combined in the Transport Workers' Federation (*Transportarbetareförbundet*), which consisted chiefly of dockers. As its name indicates, this union wished to unite all kinds of transport workers, and therefore also seamen, coachmen, etc., and, in addition, tried to win over warehousemen, woodyard workers, coal depôt workers, and similar groups who could not strictly be regarded as engaged in transport.

The only federations of an industrial character at that time were the Federation of Sawmill and Woodyard Workers (*Sågverks- och brädgårdsarbetareförbundet*), which after a few years emphasised this character by taking the name Federation of Workers in the Sawmill Industry (*Sågverksindustriarbetareförbundet*), and the Textile Workers' Federation (*Textilarbetareförbundet*), and presumably, the Chemical Industry Workers' Federation (*Kemisk-tekniska arbetareförbundet*). The latter organisation, however, soon became a mixture of industrial unions and pure craft unions. In 1905 it absorbed the Federation of Leather Workers and in 1907 the Federation of Glovers. Shortly after, it covered furriers as well. In 1905 its name was changed to the Chemical, Technical, Mill and Leather Workers' Federation, and two years later it was called The Amalgamated Federations (*De förenade förbunden*).

The list of the federations formed in the 'nineties shows a tendency to specialise. It is significant that the pastrycooks were not content to join the Federation of Bakers and Confectioners (*Bageri- och konditoriarbetareförbundet*), but formed a federation of their own. This body did not last long, but was absorbed by the Federation of Bakers and Confectioners in 1904. The tendency towards specialisation became even more marked at the beginning of the next century. Thus, in addition to the Federation of Glovers, a Federation of Women Glove Stitchers was formed. Sections of workers left the Transport Workers' Federation and formed the Federations of Engineers and Firemen (*Maskinist- och eldareförbundet*), of Seamen and Firemen (*Sjömans- och eldareförbundet*) in 1903, and of Carters and Warehousemen (*Varuutkörare- och handels arbetareförbundet*) in 1906. The electrical trade unions affiliated to the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation formed the Federation of Electrical Workers (*Elektriska arbetare-*

*förbundet*) in 1906, and a Federation of Engine Drivers (*Lokomotivmannaförbundet*) was formed in 1908 by the side of the Railwaymen's Federation (*Järnvägsmannaförbundet*). In 1910 the Municipal Employees' Federation (*Kommunalarbetareförbundet*) was formed by members of the General and Factory Workers' Federation, and this was joined by the tramwaymen after the dissolution of the Tramwaymen's Federation following the general strike of 1909.

The tendency towards specialisation was, however, counteracted by opposite activities in others organisations. A certain number of examples have already been mentioned. In addition, the General and Factory Workers' Federation absorbed the Federation of Glass Workers in 1902 and the Chimneysweeps' Federation formed in 1900. The Ropemakers' Federation amalgamated with the Textile Workers in 1906, and the Cork Workers' Federation formed in 1901 joined the Brewers' Federation (*Bryggeriarbetareförbundet*) in 1909.

The following were the federations formed in the first ten years of the century.

Federations	Date of formation	Official membership
Gilders and glaziers	16 Apr. 1900	107
Chimneysweeps	27 June 1900	90
Engineers and firemen	?	?
Cork workers	25 Feb. 1901	186
Telegraph and telephone workers	24 June 1901	200
Women's trade unions	7 Oct. 1902	275
Seamen and firemen	1 Feb. 1903	225
Hatters	1 Feb. 1903	129
Lithographers	1 Jan. 1904	93
Butchers and pork butchers	22 Apr. 1904	371
Decorators	1904	150
Hairdressers' assistants	13 Dec. 1906	225
Carters and warehousemen	15 Apr. 1906	680
Electrical workers	17 Sept. 1906	356
Engine drivers	21 Apr. 1908	2,572
Asylum attendants	4 July 1908	313
Agricultural workers	2 Aug. 1908	4,753
Agricultural and forestry workers	3 Jan. 1909	1,021
Municipal employees	23 Jan. 1910	1,218

As already stated, some of these federations themselves amalgamated with each other after a short time. The Women's Trade Union Federation was dissolved in 1909, most of its members joining the Tailors' Federation (*Skrädderiarbetareförbundet*). The Agricultural and Forestry Workers' Federation was dissolved after only a year's working.

#### INDUSTRIAL VERSUS CRAFT UNIONISM

As early as 1890 the trade union movement had been affected to such an extent by the general progress of industrial development that many of the old crafts had lost their character of handicrafts. The boundaries between the crafts had become more and



more blurred, owing to the technical advances of machinery and the consequent specialisation of labour. In shoemaking, for instance, there had been a complete revolution to the detriment of handicraft. This industrial development continued even more rapidly in the new century.

Moreover, the trade unions, in their capacity as mouthpiece for the workers, had to deal more and more with companies instead of with individual employers; and organisations of the employers, formed either on the basis of craft or industry, gradually sprang up in order to counteract the workers' unions. In the engineering industry the foundation of an employers' organisation was laid already in 1896, when a local association was formed in Göteborg. The extension of this association to the whole of the engineering industry was hastened by the political general strike declared by the Social Democratic Party in the spring of 1902. The Swedish Engineering Association (*Sveriges verkstadsförening*) was formed on 7 June of that year, followed by corresponding organisations for manufacturing industry and the building industry, namely, the Swedish Employers' Federation (*Svenska arbetsgivareföreningen*) formed on 17 September 1902, and the Central Employers' Federation (*Centrala arbetsgivareförbundet*).

When, in 1905, the Swedish Engineering Association acted for the employers in concluding a collective agreement for the engineering industry — the first national agreement that had ever been concluded for engineering — there were no less than four trade union federations representing the workers, namely, the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation, the Moulders' Federation (*Gjutareförbundet*), the Woodworkers' Federation (*Träarbetareförbundet*), and the General and Factory Workers' Federation. When, three years later, the agreement was renewed, there were yet another four federations representing the workers, namely, the Federations of Tinsmiths (*Bleck- och plattslagareförbundet*), of Painters (*Maleriarbetareförbundet*), of Bricklayers (*Murareförbundet*) and of Transport Workers. This made it clear to many trade unionists that so divided a representation of labour could scarcely prove advantageous. It was difficult to handle and needlessly costly, besides which it involved the risk that one federation might follow quite a different course from the others, making their work difficult, and even dragging them into adventurous and costly disputes in support of its special demands which might scarcely be of interest to the majority of workers. The craft point of view was, however, still so predominant in 1906 as regards the organisation of the trade union movement that even in the engineering industry a strict adherence to division by crafts was advocated. One of the leaders of the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation thus declared at the congress of the Federation of Trade Unions (*Landsorganisationen i Sverige*)<sup>(2)</sup>, held in 1906: "The principle has been and should always be that each worker

(2) See below, sub. voc.

should belong to the union covering his trade. In order to maintain this principle, we iron workers have moved that the federations shall not be organised as industrial federations. We should retain the forms of organisation we have developed, and should therefore not speak of industrial federations in our constitution but only of trade federations". The congress supported this declaration and approved the following definition: "A trade union federation is defined as an organisation including the workers in a trade throughout the country".

Within three years, however, there had been a complete change of opinion. In 1909 the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation had become the most ardent advocate of the principle of industrial unions. It demanded that the congress of the National Federation should express itself in favour of industrial unions, which were defined as "covering all the workers in an industry". Similar demands were put forward in many other resolutions. The executive of the National Federation, the National Secretariat, also recommended "a gradual transition to pure and simple industrial unions, . . . instructing the National Secretariat and the executives of the federations to promote the absorption of smaller groups in an industry into the federation with the largest membership". The congress of the National Federation adopted the recommendation of the Secretariat, and instructed a committee to undertake an investigation of the question before the next congress.

The committee on starting its work found that very few federations at that time, the end of 1908, had attained any substantial membership. Only six federations, the General and Factory Workers' Federation, the Iron and Metal Workers, the Railwaymen, the Workers in the Sawmill Industry, the Transport Workers, and the Woodworkers, had a membership exceeding 10,000. These six federations combined had over 60 per cent. of the total membership (221,181) of the 41 existing federations. Many of the others had only a very insignificant membership. The largest organisation was the General and Factory Workers' Federation, to which almost a fifth of all organised workers belonged; it was a mixed craft and industrial federation, having a total membership of 43,922. About 22,000 of the members were general workers, namely, unskilled workers in the building industry, municipal employees, and workers employed on road and canal construction; the number of factory workers was about 16,300 and included skilled iron workers, woodworkers, bricklayers, electricians, etc.; there were 1,755 glass factory workers, many of whom were skilled. The federation also included about 1,000 coal miners and potters, a certain number of warehousemen, chimneysweeps, etc. The Amalgamated Federations and the Transport Workers' Unions were also very mixed collections. The first of these was still composed of workers in the chemical industries, together with millers, leather workers, potters, glovers, furriers, etc. The Transport Workers Federation included,

in addition to dockers, carters, timberyard workers, building labourers, scavengers, firemen, and warehousemen.

Examples of strictly craft unions were found in the federations of Tinsmiths, Moulders, Hatters (*Hattarbetareförbundet*), Lithographers (*Litografförbundet*), Bricklayers, Painters, Coopers (*Tunnbinderiarbetareförbundet*), Typographers (*Typografförbundet*).

The number of industrial unions (as distinct from industrial federations) was not great. Strictly speaking, only the Federations of Brewers, Workers in the Sawmill Industry, and Tobacco Workers (*Tobaksarbetareförbundet*) could be regarded as such.

The outcome of the work of the investigation committee was laid before the 1912 congress of the National Federation. The committee submitted a detailed proposal for the reorganisation of the trade union movement on the lines of industrial unionism. It did not, however, advocate that this reorganisation should be immediate, but recommended that the congress should emphasise its decision of 1909 as to a gradual transition to industrial unions, the guiding principles to be followed being that the federations should include all workers engaged in one and the same industry, that their sphere of activity should be adapted to the sphere of application of collective agreements, and that for reasons of expediency certain small and closely related industries should be united to form single federations. These principles were approved by the congress, as well as the organisation scheme drafted by the committee. The craft unions, on the other hand, raised objections to the scheme, and in order to meet their criticisms the congress declared that no violence should be done to "federations which had hitherto acted independently", and that the independence of no federation should be declared unjustified as long as the majority of the members considered that an amalgamation with, or absorption into, a given industrial federation would have a detrimental effect on their interests.

The committee's reorganisation scheme involved the reduction of the 41 existing federations to 22 industrial federations, the largest of which would be the Metal Workers' Federation and would include all workers capable of organisation in the engineering and iron foundry industries. On the basis of the 1908 figures the membership of this new federation would constitute 16.4 per cent. of the total membership of all unions. The nucleus of the federation would be formed by the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation. The Moulders' Federation would be dissolved, its members joining the new industrial federation, while the members of the Tinsmiths' Federation, the Painters' Federation, and others who were employed in engineering and iron works would also be transferred to it. Reorganisation on the industrial basis was likely to fall with particular heaviness on the General and Factory Workers' Federation. This organisation was to be formed into a general factory workers' federation for "workers employed at chemical, technical and other factories who cannot

be assigned to special industrial federations, and general workers who should not be attached to any other industrial federation". Thus the General and Factory Workers' Federation would have to resign part of their membership to new federations of workers in the building industry, in the building materials industry, in the paper industry, and in road and canal construction, so that instead of being the largest federation it would only come sixth in order of membership.

Under this scheme most of the craft unions would have had to be dissolved. But the cautious utterances of the congress of the Confederation of Trade Unions in 1912 bear witness that the craft point of view was still very much to the fore when the decision as to organisation was adopted, and the slowness with which the decision is being carried into effect shows that such an attitude still predominates very widely. Most of the craft federations which should have disappeared in accordance with the decision are still in existence and might even be said to be more vigorous than ever. The Moulders' Federation, for instance, has been so strong an adherent of the craft point of view that it was decided to admit unskilled foundry workers (helpers) to membership; until then these workers had been referred to the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation and the General and Factory Workers' Federation. Recent statements show very clearly that the moulders have no inclination to join the Metal Workers' Federation. Similar statements have been made in connection with other typical craft unions, the Bricklayers' and the Painters' Federations, which ought, on the principles of industrial unionism, to have been absorbed in the Building Workers' Federation.

The principles of industrial unionism are accepted with much greater enthusiasm by engineering and factory workers. By now the Metal Workers' Federation (*Metallindustriarbetareförbundet*) presumably covers most of the unskilled workers employed in engineering and iron works. (But attempts to transfer skilled workers employed in these industries but belonging to various craft unions have failed; this is, for instance, the case with wood patternmakers who belong to the Woodworkers' Federation, tinsmiths, painters, electricians, moulders and others). Certain members of the General and Factory Workers' Federation, together with members of the Sawmill Workers' Federation, have formed a Paper Workers' Federation, and others have formed a Road and Canal Construction Workers' Federation. Schemes have also been put forward for creating federations of workers in the building materials industry, of match factory workers, and sugar factory workers from among the membership of the General and Factory Workers, but hitherto these schemes have not been approved by the majority of the workers employed in the industries in question.

On the other hand, in opposition to the reorganisation scheme adopted in 1912, certain small special unions have been formed. Thus the machine minders in the paper industry and the loom

repairers in the textile industry have each formed their special federations. Two local agricultural federations appeared side by side with the Agricultural Workers' Federation (*Upplands lantarbetareförbundet* and *Mellersta Sveriges skogs- och lantarbetareförbund*). The Federation of Seamen and Firemen ceased to exist and was succeeded by the Seamen's Union (*Sjömansunionen*), the Firemen's Union (*Eldareunionen*), the Association of Ships' Stewards (*Stewartföreningen*), the Association of Women Employed at Sea (*Föreningen för sjöfarande kvinnor*), and the Federation of Workers Employed in Inland and Coast Navigation (*Svenska insjö- och skärgårdsflottans förbund*).

Again in opposition to the 1912 reorganisation scheme has been the formation of a Federation of Workers in the Food Industries (*Livsmedelsarbetareförbundet*) by the amalgamation of the Federation of Bakers and Confectioners and the Federation of Butchers. The object of this Federation is to combine all groups of workers employed in food industries, such as millers, yeast factory workers, and so on.

There is thus little homogeneity in the structure of the Swedish trade union movement. It is, however, undoubtedly developing in the direction of industrial unionism. The last congress of the National Federation, held from 28 August to 4 September 1922, adopted a resolution put forward by the Metal Workers' Federation which will unquestionably hasten development in this direction. In accordance with the resolution, reorganisation in conformity with the principles of industrial unionism must be effected by 31 December 1925 at latest. Presumably the 1912 organisation scheme will have to be modified in certain respects, and it is possible that, as a transition measure and in order to take into account the psychological factors and actual conditions in the craft unions, only federations or cartels of related unions will be formed, retaining the organic independence of the federations. It is quite possible that the problem will be solved in this way, for instance, in the building industry<sup>(3)</sup>. In any case, the bricklayers and the painters' federations will not be inclined to be absorbed immediately in an industrial federation.

#### THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SWEDISH TRADE UNIONS

The federations are composed of trade unions, whose sphere of activity is limited either by craft or industry. In certain cases, when they are organised by industry, they have been subjected to other kinds of subdivision, either into workshop clubs or sections — workshop clubs, for instance, in the Metal Workers' Federation, and sections in the Federations of General and Factory

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<sup>(3)</sup> A referendum was taken in the Woodworkers' Union at the end of 1922 on the question of dividing up the Union into two unions, one for building wood-workers and one for wood-workers in factories and workshops. The majority were in favour of the proposal, and the division will take place shortly.

Workers and Transport Workers ; or else they have been combined in local organisations. In the building industry it even happens that the local branches of different craft unions are combined in a general organisation. These local organisations have not very great powers, their main activities being confined to agitation and propaganda. The same applies to the district trade union organisations formed in certain districts by the local branches of different federations, which are only fitted into the general system very loosely. They are chiefly regarded as local branches of the National Federation. They are not allowed to interfere in "the activities and rights of the federations", but must exclusively devote themselves to the more general work of agitation and information, in addition to which they must pay special attention to helping the unemployed.

TABLE I. MEMBERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF SWEDISH TRADE UNIONS, 30 JUNE 1922

Federation	Number of local branches	Membership		
		Men	Women	Total
Woodworkers	243	15,260	39	15,299
Tinsmiths	49	1,455	—	1,455
Workers in the sawmill industry	307	22,495	8	22,503
Painters	72	3,248	—	3,248
Tailors	98	2,554	4,136	6,690
Shoemakers and leather workers	55	5,655	2,665	8,320
Tobacco workers	10	649	2,423	3,072
Workers in food industries	101	7,013	2,672	9,685
Brewers	50	3,003	1,178	4,181
General and factory workers	299	27,865	2,786	30,651
Coopers	20	445	—	445
Moulders	147	4,888	—	4,888
The Amalgamated Federations	94	4,532	891	5,423
Bricklayers	85	3,971	—	3,971
Stoneworkers	86	2,804	—	2,804
Miners	39	3,405	—	3,405
Saddlers and upholsterers	29	807	55	862
Bookbinders	27	1,070	1,863	2,933
Road and canal construction workers	49	2,056	1	2,057
Transport workers	118	11,298	714	12,012
Municipal employees	149	14,455	928	15,383
Tilemakers	21	512	4	516
Warehousemen	86	4,885	1,390	6,275
Hatters	8	118	296	414
Lithographers	15	760	—	760
Hairdressers' assistants	19	529	37	566
Metal workers	245	57,606	1,955	59,561
Insurance clerks	9	189	34	223
Firemen	24	2,309	—	2,309
Typographers	94	6,353	441	6,794
Forestry workers and timber floaters	91	3,707	—	3,707
Paper workers	125	17,107	554	17,661
Railwaymen	255	35,700	457	36,157
Total	3,119	268,708	25,527	294,230

The National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions was formed as the central organ of the whole trade union movement. Its foundation was laid at the Scandinavian Labour Congress held in Stockholm in 1897 and at the congress of the Social Democratic Party of the same year. It was constituted on 5 to 8 August 1898. It is of the nature of a reinsurance and defensive organisation. On 30 June last it consisted of the following 33 federations.

Under the constitution in its present form, membership of the National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions is open to every federation "consisting of workers employed in one or more closely related industries (industrial unions), trades or crafts (craft unions), and associations without access to unions of the above description". The condition of membership is, of course, that the unions or associations "recognise the objects of the National Confederation" and are prepared to abide by its constitution. A further condition has also been established, that the federation shall levy a minimum subscription, the amount of which is to be fixed by the congress of the Federation. This minimum was raised by the last congress (1922) from 15.60 kronor for so-called full members and 7.80 for half members<sup>(4)</sup> per annum to 23.40 kronor and 13.00 kronor respectively. The reason for establishing a minimum rate of subscription lay in the need for making the federations as far as possible economically independent as regards lock-out and strike risks. Some of the federations had suffered from the inclination to work with very small membership fees, so that if they happened to be involved in extensive or prolonged strikes or lock-outs they were far too much compelled to rely on the help of other federations in a better economic position. It is probable that this regulation has in some cases deterred federations from joining the National Federation. This applies especially to organisations of civil servants, for whom there is no risk of lock-out and scarcely any risk of strikes. Thus the important Federation of Railwaymen only joined the National Federation this year (1922). The discussions concerning affiliation in this federation had largely turned on the question of minimum subscription, although it may not alone have been responsible for the previous refusal to join the Confederation. In the Postmen's Federation, however, this factor is probably still of decisive importance. From another point of view organisations sometimes keep outside the National Federation because of the risk of being involved in extra expenditure in the event of very extensive and prolonged lock-outs affecting the National Federation.

Other federations have not obtained membership on account of the decision of the congress of the Confederation as to the need for reorganisation on the basis of industrial unionism. This was, for instance, the case with the electrical workers, who, it is felt, should join the Metal Workers' Federation, the Federation of Machine Minders in the Paper Industry, and similar special bodies. A union for the civilian workers in the army,

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<sup>(4)</sup> Half members are mainly women and minors.

formed a few years ago, was directly refused membership by the congress of the National Federation for the reason that it could not be fitted into the system of organisation advocated by the congress.

There exist, therefore, a certain member of organisations outside the National Federation which either do not consider themselves able to belong to it for economic or other reasons, or do not satisfy the requirements of the congress of the National Federation from the point of view of organisation.

Federation	Number of Branches	Membership
Textile workers	96	15,580
Agricultural workers	298	11,956
Postmen	47	3,800
Hotel and restaurant workers	26	3,415
Prison officials	35	700
Customs officials	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )

The second category is made up as follows :

Federation	Number of Branches	Membership
Electrical workers	117	4,658
Civilian workers in the army	40	3,430
Gardeners	28	556
Railway clerks	( <sup>5</sup> )	2,000
Engine drivers	89	5,100
Asylum attendants	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Asylum employees	15	800
Power-house employees in state asylums	( <sup>5</sup> )	32
Seamen	17	3,000
New Association of Shop Stewards	2	1,661
Association of Women employed at Sea	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Workers employed in inland and coast navigation	—	300
Decorators	—	125
Engineers, firemen, and repairers	12	500
Chimneysweeps	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Watchmakers	9	140
Telegraph and telephone employees	33	4,022
Telegraph foremen and repairers	8	670
Telegraph messengers, operators, etc.	6	626
Women telephone operators	24	2,416
Wireless telegraphists	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Machine minders	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Agricultural workers of Uppland	110	4,000
Loom repairers	14	370
Police	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )

There are thus some thirty trade unions of workers or of salaried employees in subordinate positions. The above list does not claim to be complete, and there may be even more such organisations, although they have probably not been in existence very long. An approximate estimate for such organisations gives a total membership of 80,000 distributed over more than a thousand local unions. The most important of these independent unions are the Textile Workers' Federation (15,580) and the

(<sup>5</sup>) No information.



Agricultural Workers' Federation (11,956), both of which formerly belonged to the National Federation, the Postmen's Federation (3,800), the Federation of Telegraph and Telephone Workers (4,022), the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Workers (*Hotell- och restaurangpersonalförbundet*) (3,415) formed in 1918, the Federation of Customs Officials (*Tullmannaförbundet*) (membership not exactly ascertainable), the Electrical Workers' Federation (*Elektriska arbetareförbundet*) (4,658) formed in 1907, the Engine Drivers' Federation (5,100), and the Seamen's Union (3,000). The amalgamation of the latter with the Firemen's Union, which is affiliated to the National Federation, has already been proposed and will probably take place fairly soon.

### ORGANISATION OF INTELLECTUAL WORKERS

Hitherto attention has been exclusively given to branches of the trade union movement covering organisations of manual workers and workers of similar standing. During the last ten years trade union activity has begun in certain intellectual occupations. Here the principles of trade unionism have been gaining ground, especially during the economic depression caused by the world war and its consequences. As yet, however, trade union organisation in the professions is in a very initial stage. The greatest degree of organisation has been reached by journalists, dispensing chemists, and actors. The organisations of the two first-mentioned professions have taken part in negotiations for collective agreements. The Society of Journalists (*Journalistföreningen*), to which journalists of all the political parties belong, made provision in its constitution in 1919 for securing strike pay for its members; it is not known how far similar provisions are in force, for instance, for dispensing chemists and actors. A tendency towards trade union action has lately appeared among bank and office clerks and state and municipal employees. Various groups of persons in higher positions in industry and shipping already belong to organisations of more or less trade union character. There are thus in existence two general unions for foremen. In shipping there is an association of ships' masters covering the whole country and a ships' engineers' union.

### EXTENT OF TRADE UNION ORGANISATION

There are no reliable statistical data for determining the extent of organisation in different branches of industry. It is probable that the majority of manual workers in industry and trade are now organised, but in agriculture, shipping, and commerce the number of organised workers constitutes only a small percentage of the total number employed. Some light on the subject may be thrown by official statistics on collective agreements. According to these, the number of workers at the end of 1920 who were

affected by collective agreements was 424,366. The estimated number of organised workers at that date was 402,896 of whom 280,029 belonged to the National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions. The actual number of workers is, however, much greater than that given by the collective agreement figures. If the two sets of figures are compared, the following results are obtained for industry, for which alone reliable statistics are available.

TABLE II. EXTENT OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AMONG SWEDISH WORKERS IN 1920

Industry	Number of workers employed in 1920	Workers covered by collective agreements 31 December 1920	
		Number	Percentage of number employed
Mining and metal	141,400	98,726	69.8
Earth and stone	43,572	28,554	67.1
Timber and wood (excluding forestry)	69,773	37,410	53.6
Paper and printing	50,168	40,918	81.6
Food	51,668	28,143	54.5
Textile and clothing	52,666	33,328	63.4
Leather, hair, and rubber	21,519	15,925	74.0
Chemical	17,220	10,051	58.0

The information we have given indicates that, although the Swedish trade union movement has not reached the wished for degree of homogeneity as regards structure, it is actively adapting itself to changing economic and industrial conditions. The dispersion of forces appears mainly in branches of industry where the work of organisation was only seriously begun during the last ten years. It might also be said that the proportion of organised workers to the total number is as high as in most other countries, and is perhaps even higher than in other countries for industry alone, with the exception of Germany and Austria.

#### THE WORKING OF THE TRADE UNION SYSTEM

The Communist slogan "democratic centralisation" best puts the problem of the working of the Swedish trade union system. The consolidation of craft and industrial federation which has been effected and which has led to the combination of the more important federations in a National Confederation has naturally made centralisation necessary as regards leadership.

The original object of consolidation was to provide economic security for local trade unions in different crafts and industries when involved in disputes with employers as a result of attempts to improve the working conditions of their members. The employers' initiative in associating together by trade or by industry in order to obstruct the workers' efforts forced the workers to realise their own need for a corresponding economic security on behalf of their craft and industrial federations.

This security was sought by combining the federations in a national organisation. The development of this national policy prevented relations with employers from being confined to the narrow sphere of local trade unionism, and made them more and more the concern of a whole trade or whole industry.

The federations were no longer able to confine their activities to the granting of strike pay ; they also had to deal with wage movements in their preliminary stages, to conduct them, and finally appear as the party representing the workers when collective agreements were concluded. In a few cases the National Federation has had to fulfil the same duties, at any rate as regards the conclusion of agreements.

This development has naturally stamped the constitutional side of the movement as expressed in the rules of the organisations. The constitutions of the federations, and also of the National Federation, now contain numerous detailed provisions as to procedure on initiating, conducting, and concluding wage movements and strikes. It is now a rule in the federations that, if a local trade union wishes to demand an increase in wages, it must inform the executive of its federation in good time. The demands to be laid before the employer must be submitted to that executive and approved; a union may not resort to a strike or blockade<sup>(6)</sup> unless it has obtained that approval, and must similarly apply to the executive before coming to terms with the employer. If a wage movement is started without giving the federation executive an opportunity to examine the demands put forward by the union, the latter runs the risk of obtaining no assistance from the executive in case of necessity, and if a strike should be declared without authorisation, no financial aid can be claimed from the federation funds. These restrictions have been found necessary, partly because the federations wanted as far as possible to obtain collective agreements which should be uniform, especially on points of principle, and partly and above all in order to husband their economic and strategic resources. In the absence of such regulations groups of members would be able to call on the resources of the federations and of other members to an extent that would hamper other groups within the same federation when anxious to improve their own conditions, and even to an extent that would perhaps jeopardise that very co-operation which their mutual organisation was intended to promote and secure.

#### THE DEMAND FOR DECENTRALISATION

In some trade unions, however, the centralised system thus created has not met with approval. Younger "radical" members, in particular, have reacted against the system, being ignorant of the preceding circumstances which led to this development. Unable by experience to acquire that knowledge of the fundam-

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<sup>(6)</sup> A 'blockade' includes all measures short of an actual strike taken by trade union workers to exert pressure on an employer ; e. g. the publication of a 'keep-away' list.

ental principles at stake in the system of organisation adopted, they have sometimes lacked the inclination to supplement their lack of knowledge by enquiry. Their instinctive desire for freedom and their primitive ideas on the subject of democracy have misled them into supposing that the system is nothing but a subtle device of leaders greedy for power. They have not observed, or else they have not understood, that the system is the outcome of a natural process of organisation followed both by their own side and by the employers, nor have they fully realised that the responsibility for giving it expression in the constitutions of the trade unions lies with the members of their own organisations. Yet these constitutions were built up on the most democratic principles. Every worker employed within the sphere of activity of the organisation is entitled to membership, irrespective of sex, birth, or opinions, and general, equal, and direct balloting is the rule within the organisations. All members are, therefore, equally entitled to participate in the election of those representatives who are responsible for decisions on constitutional questions at congresses of the Federation, and also for the election of the executive and officials of their own federation. No officials are elected for life ; each congress can elect new leaders or recall its instructions, and all members are equally entitled to do all within their power so as to secure that the congresses shall be composed of persons in whom they feel confidence as likely to give consideration to their demands and requirements. In other words, the Swedish trade union movement rests on constitutional principles which are the most democratic that can be devised. Centralisation has not limited democracy ; on the contrary, it represents a step forward in democratic principle in that it creates guarantees for an equal distribution of rights and duties among all.

The demand for decentralisation has, however, been pressed on the ground that the control given to the leaders is to the detriment of members' interests both within the organisation and on the labour market. The demand is put in the form that "all power should be in the hands of the members". Members should be entitled to initiate wage demands and declare strikes and blockades without waiting for the approval of the federation executives ; yet the latter would still be under the obligation of acting, when requested, in negotiations with employers and of paying out strike pay from federation funds. These demands are nearly as old as the trade union movement itself, but they were only given definite form after the general strike of 1909. At that time superficial information as to Revolutionary French Syndicalism had been acquired by certain groups, which had been attracted by its pronounced advocacy of decentralisation. Discovering that they had no chance of winning over the majority of trade unionists, the supporters of this point of view formed on 25-27 June 1910 an organisation in opposition to the National Federation, thus attempting to initiate a Revolutionary Syndicalist trade union movement.

This organisation was entitled the Central Organisation of

Swedish Workers (*Sverges arbetares centralorganisation*). Principles of decentralisation were adopted and the craft and industrial unions were to be replaced by so-called local united organisations, which in turn would be combined in one central organisation. Temporarily the local organisations would be composed of local trade unions, but the principle was upheld that all workers employed in a given district should be united in one general local organisation irrespective of their occupation, although they might be allowed to retain their workshop or branch clubs. Local organisations would be supreme, and the central organisation would only be entitled to make grants from funds collected by voluntary contribution when some local organisation desired the economic support of other organisations during strikes or lock-outs. The centre of gravity was throughout to lie in "direct action in the form of ruthless lightning strikes, and, failing other means, in resort to a complete general strike". No collective agreements were to be concluded with employers or employers' organisations to run for any definite period.

The Revolutionary Syndicalist trade union movement has not gained a great deal of support. In 1910 only 696 workers, distributed over 21 local organisations, had joined it. By the end of 1920 the central organisation consisted of 398 local organisations with a combined membership of 32,999. The members are mostly unskilled workers. The movement has, however, found some support among so-called 'reformist' trade unions affiliated to the National Federation. For the last ten years proposals have been laid before every congress of the National Federation for replacing the unions by local organisations. The argument in favour of these proposals has usually been the old demand for "the transfer of power from the leaders to the members", but the support given has been meagre.

The demand for decentralisation has also frequently been discussed in the federations and has been made the subject of resolutions. The question at issue, however, has not so much been any new form of organisation as the powers of local branches already established. Most of these proposals have been defeated at the federation congresses, and considerable attention was attracted when the congress of the Metal Workers' Federation in 1919 approved a proposal for amending its constitution on decentralisation lines. Opinion was sharply divided, the votes in favour being 108 and those against 92, and when the congress decided to take a referendum of members, the result was a rejection even by the members of the branch which had drafted it; a renewed proposal at the last congress (1922) only obtained 56 votes as against 189.

#### THE POSITION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION

One of the conditions of membership of the National Federation is the retention of centralising regulations in the constitutions of the federations. The National Federation has assumed an obligation to support the affiliated organisations "on occasions when the

employers attempt, by means of lock-outs, to hinder the work of the organisation or the efforts of the workers to improve their wage conditions and on all other occasions when the right of combination is threatened and the workers are locked out for attempts to form organisations, and in cases of wage reductions". The functions of the National Federation are, therefore exclusively defensive, and they have been thus limited by the federations themselves to protect their own right of self-determination. Trade union activity is to be centred in the federations, which are considered most suited to conduct wage demands and conclude agreements with the employers in their respective spheres. The National Federation has become an insurance institution, although it is its right and duty, if the need should arise, to take direct part in the struggle by inducing other federations to declare sympathetic blockades<sup>(7)</sup> and sympathetic strikes with a view to coming to the relief of federations involved in lock-outs. This right was exercised, for instance, in 1909, when a general strike was proclaimed as a reply to the very extensive lock-outs declared by the Swedish Employers' Federation.

By thus limiting the functions of the National Federation in order to protect the right to self-determination of the affiliated organisations, centralisation in the National Federation has been made less strict than in the federations themselves. The latter are, however, under the constitution of the National Federation, required to act in agreement with the executive of the former whenever they intend to take steps which might be expected to lead to a lock-out of such an extent<sup>(8)</sup> that the support of the National Federation would be needed. "A strike which may be expected to lead to a lock-out shall not be declared unless the Secretariat approves of the measure", according to the constitution. An appeal against the decision of the Secretariat may be brought before the Representative Council, which consists of delegates of the federations and acts as the highest authority of the National Federation between the congresses.

In some quarters the fact that the National Federation has only defensive functions is regarded with disfavour. The demand is put forward that it should have power to declare, conduct, and finance offensive movements. The question has been discussed at several congresses, but it appears that the federations show no

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(7) The following regulations are in force as regards sympathetic blockades.

"A blockade of a place of work and a boycott of goods can only be declared binding by the executive of the federation.

"A blockade or boycott, although affecting workers belonging to other trade groups, can only be declared if the executive of the federation or federation to which the other workers belong agrees thereto. If agreements between the executives of the federations cannot be reached, the matter shall be reported to the National Secretariat, which will settle the question.

"Benefit paid to members taking part in a sympathetic blockade shall be paid out by the federation which requested the declaration of a sympathetic blockade, or by the National Federation when the sympathetic blockade has been declared by the National Secretariat".

(8) This obligation comes into force when the lock-out involves more than three per cent. of the membership of the federation.

inclination to give up their present right to self-determination, which they would have to sacrifice were the centre of gravity in the wage movement transferred to the National Federation. The question was again raised at the last congress of the National Federation (1922), when under the influence of Communist propaganda, the proposals put forward showed a pronounced tendency in favour of centralisation. Local self-determination was disregarded, and both craft and industrial unions were disapproved as unsuited to modern conditions; the demand was pressed that the Federation should be turned into a "class organisation" prepared to take up the fight on a wide front against private capitalism. Such partly political arguments were reinforced by others inspired by trade union interests, especially by representatives of the industrial unions. It had been found, especially in the Paper Workers' Federation, that a strict application of the principles of industrial unionism necessitates a system under which the National Federation undertakes to support the financing of offensive action as well. It is a disadvantage of thoroughgoing unionism that a federation runs the risk of having all its members involved in a dispute at the same time, so that its economic resources are exhausted more rapidly than those of a federation which, like the General and Factory Workers' Federation, is composed of workers spread over several industries and trades. Nevertheless, the great majority on this occasion, too, showed no inclination to give such extended powers to the National Federation. All proposals of this kind were rejected, so that the functions of the National Federation are still confined to supporting the affiliated organisations during lock-outs and to defensive action.

#### FINANCE

By thus limiting the functions of the National Federation, it has been possible to fix the affiliation fees at as low an amount as 40 kronor a month for full members and 20 kronor for half members. Should occasion arise, the executive of the National Federation may levy additional contributions. The subscriptions levied by the federations on their local branches vary very considerably. The average is about 1 krone weekly per member. In 1920 the lowest ordinary subscription among the unions affiliated to the National Federation was that paid in the Hatters' Federation, namely, 0.40 kronor a week; the highest, of 1.80 kronor a week, was paid in the Typographers' Federation.

About twenty federations also pay unemployment benefit, and a certain number have started sickness and funeral benefit funds. One federation, the Typographers' Federation, also pays its members disablement benefit.

The receipts and expenditure of the federations affiliated to the National Federation during the years 1888 to 1920 were as follows.

TABLE III. RECEIPTS OF SWEDISH TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS AFFILIATED TO THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SWEDISH TRADE UNIONS FROM 1888 TO 1920

Receipts	Amount	Percentage of total
	Kronor	
Members' subscriptions	70,360,059	83.0
Contributions from the Federation	6,412,008	7.5
Interest, etc.	4,797,807	5.5
Foreign contributions	2,222,014	2.6
Voluntary contributions	1,018,709	1.4

TABLE IV. EXPENDITURE OF SWEDISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION AFFILIATED TO THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SWEDISH TRADE UNION FROM 1888 TO 1920

Expenditure	Amount	Percentage of total
	Kronor	
Wage movements and labour disputes	38,510,581	53.2
Administration	9,890,688	13.7
Propaganda and publications	3,941,211	5.4
Unemployment and travelling grants	5,350,673	7.4
Affiliation fees of the federations	7,569,810	10.4
Miscellaneous	7,097,706	9.9

During 1921 the expenditure of the unions on strikes and lock-outs amounted to 4,303,763 kronor. Approximately 10,000,000 kronor were paid in unemployment benefit.

The capital in the hands of the federations amounted to 7,465,558 kronor, or 25.86 kronor per member. The capital of the National Federation at the same date was 2,123,957 kronor.

#### POLITICAL ASPECTS

Trade unionism and Socialism in Sweden are twin movements. Propaganda for Socialism among the workers began at about the same time as the work of trade union organisation was seriously taken in hand, at the beginning of the 'eighties. Certain trade unions held out for a long time against Socialist propaganda and frequently adopted an inimical attitude. As a rule, political neutrality was observed unless a purely Liberal programme had been adopted. By the end of the 'eighties, however, the Socialists had won hearing for their views in a large number of trade unions both in Stockholm and in the country, and these unions became centres of propaganda for Socialism. The first Scandinavian Labour Congress, held at Göteborg in 1886, at which several trade unions were represented, declared its "adherence to the Socialist programme". When the Swedish Social Democratic Party was formed in 1889 several trade unions were represented. It was then decided that the Party should consist of "political, trade union, and other associations working on the basis of the class war".



From the point of view of organisation, the trade unions also occupied a fundamental position in the Party. They generally affiliated to the local branches of the Party, the so-called 'labour communes' (*Arbetarekommuner*). When the National Federation of Swedish Trade Unions was formed in 1898, the close relationship of the trade union movement with the Social Democratic Party was emphasised in its constitution in the following terms: "Affiliated organisations shall, at latest within three years after joining the National Federation, also affiliate to the Social Democratic Party, or else such organisation shall not be considered a member of the National Federation".

This regulation for compulsory affiliation was vigorously opposed, especially by the leaders of the Iron and Metal Workers' Federation, who, without disapproving of the Social Democratic Party or of Socialism, feared that the recruiting of the trade unions would be adversely affected. These fears were justified. In 1904 an anti-Socialist organisation, the Swedish Labour Federation (*Svenska arbetareförbundet*) was formed, which quoted this compulsory regulation and tried to attract workers away from the trade unions<sup>(9)</sup>. The regulation had been cancelled after only two years, in 1900. In 1908 the Social Democratic Party so amended its constitution that members of affiliated trade unions who did not wish to be regarded as members of the Party were allowed a so-called right of reservation, to the effect that the trade unions could not pay affiliation fees to the Party on their account. The constitution of the National Federation thus no longer contains regulations as to the relations between the trade unions and the Social Democratic Party, nor are such regulations to be found in the constitutions of the federations except that, in certain cases, it is stated that the federations desire to work for social reform in co-operation with the Social Democratic Party.

There are no exact figures available as to the number of trade unions and trade union members affiliated to the Social Democratic Party. An investigation was made in 1911, according to which the total number of members affiliated through trade unions was 51,098, or 45 per cent. of all trade unionists. The number of trade unions affiliated to the party rose in some cases to 70, 80, and even 90 per cent. Since 1911 the proportion has probably shifted in favour of the non-affiliated members. It is still estimated that about 86 per cent. of the 170,000 members of the Party have been recruited from the trade unions.

Although there is now no formal connection between the Social Democratic Party, on the one hand, and the National Federation and the federations, on the other, the relations between them are friendly. Attempts have been made in Syndicalist and Communist quarters to induce the National Federation and the federations to prohibit the unions from belonging to the Party, but on the whole such attempts have failed. Prohibitions of this kind have only been adopted in a few federations. At the last con-

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<sup>(9)</sup> This organisation was dissolved immediately after the general strike of 1909.

gress of the National Federation certain resolutions with this end in view were rejected. The decision of the National Federation was actuated partly by the argument that the resolutions had apparently been brought forward for party purposes in order to weaken the Social Democratic Party, and that a weakening of the Party "might involve the postponement for many years of important social questions such as the enactment of a final Act on working hours, of legislation on sickness insurance and unemployment insurance, and the revision of factory inspection, and other questions". The congress of the Metal Workers' Federation passed a similar resolution, stating that the real reason for the suggested prohibition was the desire "to dissociate the trade union movement entirely from one party and make it dependent on another". This was a reference to the Communist Party, which, although it does not allow the trade unions to affiliate as such, works energetically to obtain power over the trade unions by the formation of Communist trade union clubs. As the central organ for this movement for building up political 'nuclei' in the trade union movement, the Communist Party formed the Trade Union Propaganda Federation (*Fackliga propagandaförbundet*) in 1919, in which it was hoped to combine both trade unions and Communist clubs within the trade unions. The attempt, however, has not proved very successful. It has been stated that 41 trade unions and 38 clubs, with a combined membership of 5,450, belonged to this Propaganda Federation at the end of 1921; but the Federation has shown no sign of life during the current year, so that one may confidently assert that it has in practice ceased to exist.