

**WHAT WE WANT
AND WHERE WE ARE:
FACTS NOT PHRASES**

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What We Want and Where We Are: Facts Not Phrases by W. A. Appleton

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W. A. APPLETON

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WHAT WE WANT AND WHERE WE ARE

FACTS *not* PHRASES

Written and
revised BY
W. A. APPLETON

SECRETARY OF THE GENERAL FEDERATION
OF TRADE UNIONS

WITH A FOREWORD BY
SAMUEL GOMPERS
PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF LABOR



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FOREWORD

BY SAMUEL GOMPERS

PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

4-10-47 JNL

Great Britain has no man better fitted to write of the achievements and the accomplishments of British working people than Mr. William A. Appleton. Whether the reader finds it possible to agree at all times with Mr. Appleton's conclusions is of less moment than the fact that the reader will surely find Mr. Appleton's writings facts that are important and opinions that are the result of careful thought and long experience.

My own acquaintance with the author of this book goes back over a long period of years. As a leading trade union official in a position which has brought him in touch not only with the workers of his own country but with the workers of the world, Mr. Appleton has lived and served through a period which forms a large and illuminating background for his present effort.

He is not one of those who will, to quote his own language, "reiterate frequently exploded platitudes" or "rejoice anew over the passing of vain resolutions." Mr. Appleton is essentially and fundamentally a trade unionist. He is thoroughly in accord

with the American trade union movement in his attitude toward the theories, formulas and dogmas of the politicians. In matters of trade unionism, Mr. Appleton is probably more nearly American than any other leading British trade union official. For that reason his viewpoint and his analysis will be particularly interesting to Americans. They will be able to understand him because of this kinship of mentality.

Entirely aside from the general soundness of his views and the practical value of his information, Mr. Appleton has a claim upon Americans for a sympathetic reading of his book which will be appreciated, at least, among American trade unionists.

During the war he was one of a group, then all too small, who in England and Continental Europe, stood against peace by negotiation, but who stood for the destruction of militarism and autocracy. I make bold here to record one of the declarations I made during the war—"I hate war and I would not want this war to last one hour longer than necessary to attain democratic objectives and yet I would not end it one day before those objectives had been permanently achieved." Even though Mr. Appleton may not have used the words I employed, yet I know that was his position.

He was uncompromising in his opposition to the Stockholm conference project, the danger of which at that time was fully appreciated by only a small group in our own country but the defeat of which was a mighty factor in the conflict then raging.

Every effort of this character to intrigue the allied nations found a strong and unfaltering opponent in Mr. Appleton and those who worked with him.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Appleton will write more books. His long experience and his deep understanding should be made available to those whose opportunities have been fewer but whose needs are ever present.

SAMUEL GOMPERS,

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

To know the nature and extent of desire and the foundations upon which attempts to attain desire may be based, should be the aim of all men in all communities. Failure on the part of the great majority to analyse desire and circumstances and possibility, accentuates the outward expressions of unrest and facilitates the spread of dangerous propaganda. The tendency to generalize, apart from effective analysis, often involves the endorsement by the masses of proposals which, in spite of superficial attractiveness, too frequently tend to exhaust national strength and national resources.

The demand for maintenance, irrespective of remunerative return; the proposal for levies which involved the dissipation of capital and the consequent limitation of industrial enterprises; the demand for legislation which continually increases bureaucratic control and administrative costs, would have secured but few supporters had every proposal been stripped of political bias and subterfuge and accorded full consideration by a majority of the people.

Broadly speaking, we all think we know what it is we want. The term most frequently used to express the common desire is "better conditions."