The articles of Friedrich A. Sorge on the American labor movement in the nineteenth century have long been a useful source of material to historians of American labor. Sorge was born in Saxony in 1828\(^1\) and as a young man participated in the German Revolution of 1848. Following the failure of the revolution, he was forced into exile. In 1852, somewhat unwillingly, he came to the United States. From then until after the American Civil War he was essentially a liberal democrat, interested in atheism and cultural matters, but not evidencing any concern for the working class. In 1866, the defeat of Austria by Prussia in the Six Weeks War seemed to doom any hopes for a democratic revolution in Germany. That, perhaps combined with the increasingly rapid industrialization of the United States, and growth of an American working class, started Sorge in the direction of Marxism.

Sorge took part in the Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein, a combination of Communists and Lassalleans in New York. In 1869 this group of German radicals and workers joined the National Labor Union as Labor Union No. 5. Sorge was a delegate to the National Labor Union Conventions of 1869 and 1870. In 1871 a North American Federation of the International Workingmen’s Association (First International) was formed with Sorge as corresponding secretary. The Arbeiterverein was, in addition to its other manifestations, Section One of the International.

At the Hague Congress of the International, the seat of the General Council was transferred from London to New York, with Sorge becoming secretary. The International was finally dissolved

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\(^1\) For biographical and analytical material on Friedrich Sorge see David Herreshoff, *American Disciples of Marx* (Detroit, 1967), *passim*
at a meeting in Philadelphia in 1876. During this period, and subsequently, Sorge maintained a correspondence with Marx and acted very much as his representative. With the dissolution of the First International Sorge continued as an independent Marxist journalist who tended to keep himself aloof from the factional disputes of the Socialist Labor Party.

It is from this later period that Sorge’s articles date. He was a regular contributor to *Neue Zeit*, the theoretical organ of the German Social Democratic Party, a powerful journal that regularly featured the writings of major European Socialists such as Engels, Kautsky, Bernstein, Liebknecht, and others. Sorge’s articles appeared in the years from 1890 to about 1903. These included an irregular series on the history of the American labor movement, usually in ten year segments (1840-1850; 1850-1860; 1860-1866; 1866-1876; 1877-1885; 1886-1892). Together they make a significant history of American labor by a participant with a traditional Marxist point of view. It is from this series that the following selection is taken. In addition to these articles, there were many others on current events and specific problems such as articles on the Homestead and Coeur d’Alene strikes as well as women and child labor.²

The following selection is the last in the series generally entitled, “Die Arbeiterbewegung in den Vereinigten Staaten,” on the period 1866-1876, and appeared in *Neue Zeit*, Vol. Ax, Band 1, 1891-2, pp. 69-76.

German Workers in the Movement, The International Workingmen’s Association, Section I, and the Arbeiterzeitung, New York
By Friedrich Sorge

It has already been mentioned in the report on the war years (1860-1866) that from 1865 on German workers in the country’s major cities, especially in the middle and western states, took active part in the movement and enthusiastically organized themselves for this purpose. Chicago and New York took the lead,

² Since the submission and setting in type of this article, there has been published Friedrich A. Sorge’s *Labor Movement in the United States: A History of the American Working Class from Colonial Times to 1890*, Philip S. Foner and Benjamin Chamberlin, eds., (Westport, Ct., 1977).
with German (actually "German speaking") workers participating from various branches of industry, as far as their strength could go. Here the most important:

At the beginning of the sixties German workers' groups existed in Chicago which had developed progressively under the influence of J. Weydemeyer (see the report 1850-1860) and his friend and follower, Herman Meyer. (It should be mentioned here, that the influence of these two spread to Milwaukee, Pittsburgh, and especially to St. Louis.) The German workers' groups of Chicago were represented at the convention of German radicals in 1863 in Cleveland, and immigrants from the years of Lassallean agitation in Germany (1863 and 1864) strengthened these groups and enlivened their activity. A remarkable result of this activity was the appearance of the German Schlegel at the first National Labor Congress in Baltimore in 1866. . . . With the growth of Chicago, branch groups were formed in various quarters of the city that were in constant contact with each other and, from 1868 on, carried on a lively correspondence with the more important areas of the country, especially with New York. Both cities, New York and Chicago, worked together closely for several years more, winning great esteem for the German workers' movement in the United States. Notes about the movement in Chicago thus can be shortened and are subsumed under the following description of agitation in New York.

In the course of the next ten years, and in accord with a certain fervency typical to the movement in Chicago—the German workers there like to call Chicago Little Paris—our German workers appeared under various names as the Socialpolitische Arbeitervereine, as sections of the International Workingmen's Association, as the Labor Party of Illinois. Besides these principal would-be workers' groups, there were also various trade unions of German workers, which in 1869 after the New York model, founded their own newspaper, Der Arbeiter, but this stopped appearing with the first signs of the Franco-Prussian war (1870). In 1871 there were several sections of the International Workingmen's Association in Chicago and even the enormous fire of 1871, that, as is well known, was charged to the International, could not disturb its enthusiasm. This is also shown by their maintenance of firm relations with the Czech, Scandinavian, and French workers in the city. In 1872 (fall) quarrels broke out in the
sections, which caused some damage. At the beginning of 1874, the weekly paper of the Labor Party of Illinois was founded, Der Vorbote, the only German labor paper of that time, which even today (1891) exists as a weekly supplement of the Chicago, Arbeiterzeitung. The demonstrations of unemployed in the fall of 1873, engineered by the Internationals, were impressive, and were belittled by the citizens with fine phrases dictated by fear, like the New York demonstration, but at least they weren’t sent home with bloody heads. The quarrels which began in Autumn 1872, many triggered by those freshly immigrated German workers of both persuasions (Lassalleans and Eisenachers), were settled in a makeshift way and the executives of the Labor Party of the United States, newly founded in Philadelphia (July 1876), were dispatched to Chicago.

In Milwaukee, German trade unions active in the time period depicted, were very influential. Sections of the International were founded thus in 1872. In 1875 an adventurer entered, convincing the members to publish a weekly, later a daily, paper (Der Socialist) which he gave up after a short existence, carried on land speculations in Wisconsin, and finally ended up with the bourgeois press, where he still today, like a renegade, makes fun of his earlier opinions and defames his former comrades.

In St. Louis, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Newark, Buffalo, and Detroit, from 1871 to 1873, there existed strong German sections of the International Workingmen’s Association and in several of these places preparations were made to publish workers’ papers in German. Philadelphia made one unsuccessful attempt. Czech sections were formed in New York and Chicago; Scandinavian sections in the same two cities; also French, as well as in Patterson, Boston, Philadelphia, New Orleans, St. Louis, and San Francisco; Irish sections in New York and St. Louis. In Washington there was one section consisting entirely of civil servants, subalterns. On the Pacific coast in San Francisco, strong propaganda was being pushed already at the end of the sixties by Ph. Reiter and Alex. Henninger, now deceased. A fresh breeze of rebellion against the growing exploitation of the working class and against the increasingly outrageous, visible corruption of the bourgeois classes wafted through the German workers’ groups, goading them to reflect on their own as well as
on general social conditions thus engendering a true cadre of class conscious, socialistically inclined proletarians of German tongue, which vigourously accomplished many things. But in New York, and to a certain degree for the United States, the history of German workers’ activity in this country in this time period is associated mainly with the name of Section I. The following reports are about it.

In 1866 most members of the small, previously mentioned Lassallean association joined the Communist Club of New York, which didn’t understand the changed situation and grew rigid in inactivity. The more energetic club members formed the *Soziale Partei* in 1867 with ties to sympathetic workers. It had various branch clubs in the city and at the end of 1868 called an electoral movement to life, which has been mentioned in Article 4 of this series. In the same year (1868) the German *Assoziation Vereinigter Arbeiter*, consisting of trade unions of united carpenters, engravers, cigar makers, piano makers and varnishers, started a weekly paper called *Die Arbeiterunion*. The editorship was entrusted to—a lawyer, W.G. Landsberg, who had no idea of class struggle or didn’t want to know anything about it, cherished Malthusian ideas, and didn’t want to further the goals of the paper, propaganda for the eight hour day. When the workers decided to promote their own independent politics, he withdrew and Adolph Douai took his place.

Douai was a very gifted man, well-versed in most areas of knowledge, a true polyhistorian, as a contemporary journalist so aptly put it. Precisely because of this, he lacked originality. In the anti-slavery movement of the fifties Douai had made considerable gains in Texas, a slave state, by bold appearances and personal courage, which commanded the respect even of his enemies, the slaveholders. Later in the North of the United States he had accomplished important services for the Republican Party by speaking and writing, while at the same time being employed as a pedagogue. He was charming in his manner, faultlessly fair and was astonishingly energetic. This capable man became editor of *Die Arbeiterunion* in October 1868. It became a daily in May 1869, and was dissolved at the end of September as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. From then until his death Douai remained active in the movement as a writer and speaker. In the first
capacity he was associated with *Der Vorbote* of Chicago, with *Der Sozialdemocrat* and *Die Arbeiterstimme* in New York, with *Der Volkstaat* and *Forwärts* in Leipzig, with *Die Zukunft* in Berlin and with several other papers, with the *Labor Standard* in New York, and other labor papers in the English language. He also wrote several pamphlets in German and in English but finally he was active in a major way as a dependable, industrious co-editor of the New York *Volkszeitung*, from its founding until its demise in January, 1888.

Douai's debut in the labor movement was his taking over the editorship of *Die Arbeiterunion* which was then quite foreign to him, so it is quite understandable that Douai did not immediately separate the chaff from the wheat, nor could he. While he made great gains in the dissemination of economic knowledge among German workers by publishing many passages from *Capital*, Volume 1, by K. Marx, which had appeared a year earlier, he diminished these gains by advocating the Kellogg monetary system and by translating Kellogg's *New Monetary System* and running it as filler in *Die Arbeiterunion*. Members of the Soziale Partei often used the newspaper's space to correct the editor in the correspondence columns. This succeeded to a certain extent until the Franco-Prussian war split German workers in the United States into two camps, the chauvinists and the internationalists, at which *Die Arbeiterunion* collapsed.

When the Soziale Partei had ended its election campaign in November 1868, the members recognized that their entry had been premature. The party as such dissolved, but the most active and intelligent members, a few of whom have been previously mentioned, revived their old club, which they named *der Allgemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein*, although Lassalleanism played no further role with them. In the correct recognition that the most sustained and successful effect on a body is to work from within, the group joined the National Labor Union in February, 1869 and was accepted as Labor Union No. 5 of New York. And now there began a period of brilliant achievements, a period of the fullest development, that a labor union can achieve. Almost without exception, true, genuine, wage and hand laborers, these proletarians vied with each other in the acquisition of economic knowledge, mastering the heaviest economic and philosophic
problems. Among the hundreds of members who belonged to the club from 1869 to 1874, there was hardly one who had not read his Marx (Kapital). Certainly there were more than a dozen who had taken up the most difficult sentences and definitions and had reworked them; they were thus armed against any attack from any direction, from the great or petty bourgeoisie, from the radicals, or from the reformers. It was a true joy to attend the meetings, held every Sunday evening in 10 Ward Hotel, on the corner of Broome and Forsythe Streets, New York, in a low, poorly ventilated room. Class consciousness took these workers over bodily and awakened in them a truly fraternal sense which inspired all their dealings with their class comrades in general and their fellow club members in particular, a fraternal sense that expressed itself not so much in words as in deeds. They practiced an exemplary discipline, a discipline which for a long time assured the club of a major leading role in the American labor movement, as in the movement in general. How well deserved this place was can be shown, among other things, by the following resolutions, adopted after a thorough discussion about various important questions.

The first two paragraphs of the club’s statutes say:

‘1. The club represents general workers’ interests, strives for the realization of socialist principles and has taken up the task of organizing and centralizing trade unions—it stands on the platform of the National Labor Union and recognizes the principles of the International Workingmen’s Association.

‘2. Any wage laborer can be a member.’

The following was resolved on so-called monetary reform:

‘Under present conditions gold is the only true standard of value. Gold has come forward as the standard of value for our modern form of production: 1) because as a precious metal, it naturally wears away the least in circulation; 2) because much more labor power is embodied in it as a single commodity (use-value)\(^3\) than any other commodity; 3) because far fewer low-grade substances can be alloyed to gold than to any other circulating coin, we can more readily impose a legal rate that is recognized in the world market, something which

\(^3\) This juxtaposition of commodity and use-value does not reflect Marxian economic terminology. It may be an error in the original German or, simply, less concern with terminological precision in the years just following the publication of *Capital*.\n
is not as possible with gold as world money, at least not in the same degree: Gold as the standard of value of all goods, as guarantee for all circulated paper money, is only a result of the economic system, grows out of this, and will fall with this."

About the trade union movement:
"We recognize the fundamental necessity of trade unions for the present, since they are the only means of preventing the degradation of the unemployed, for which the capitalist class, the relentless enemy of the workers, is constantly striving and will continue to strive; but we cannot concede that the trade union comrades in their present condition are in a position to improve basically the lot of the working class."

On the eight hour question:
"The eight hour law must be legally established by the state for all labor and its violation must be met with the strongest penalties, for the worker as well as for the employer."

On public education (the clamor for education):
"The liberation of the workers from the pressure of capital is not at all dependent on public education. The consciousness of their place in society is completely sufficient if the conditions force a change in their situation.
"Necessity forces workers to adopt this consciousness even if they don’t want to, for every idea arises out of the real conditions, and the more the conditions are recognized by workers according to their experience, the more will their ingenuity be spurred and the higher will their education be advanced."

On government reform:
"Only a united social-democratic republic whose principles eliminate every exploitation of labor, can achieve the true emancipation of labor."

On the petty bourgeoisie:
"The petty bourgeoisie has a chaotic effect on the discussion of social questions."

On political procedure in conjunction with the woman question:
"In consideration that universal suffrage cannot liberate people from slavery, the Allegemeine Deutsche Arbeiterverein declares:
"1) The granting of suffrage to women does not interfere with the interests of workers;
"2) It is the duty of the workers to bring women into the social
struggle, to help liberate the workers, and thus humanity."

Words were not enough for the club, it went to work announcing its tidings and making propaganda. Its members were the driving element in the trade unions, their best officers, and the club's funds flowed constantly for the benefit of the general and local labor movement. No labor assembly, no convention, no labor festival, took place without participation from members of the club, be it as organizers, speakers, or officers. To all those who were members of the club in this period, 1869—1873, or who often attended its meetings, it will remain unforgettable; and that man is truly right who called out in his time, "Proletarians, go forth and do likewise!"

In August, 1869, the club sent a delegation to the National Labor Union Congress in Philadelphia; in August, 1870, to the same one in Cincinnati, at which the alliance with the National Labor Union loosened and broke up. In the fall of 1869, the club joined the International and held a lively correspondence with all parts of the country and abroad, especially in Germany, France (Varlin), England (Marx), and Switzerland (J. Ph. Becker). When the war between Prussia and France broke out, the club was very active in defeating the chauvinism of the German-Americans and predicted their fate to the Germans: that they would inherit the Napoleonic Empire. After the battle of Sedan it agitated vigorously against the continuation of the war and against war in general. It was therefore supported by a few radical petty bourgeois elements and by a French section of the International Workingmen's Association, which had been founded in the meantime. A Czech section was formed in the latter part of 1870, and these three sections (German, French, and Czech) held a brotherhood festival on January 22, 1871, which was attended by old Weitling, with obvious pleasure and outspoken joy. On the direct request of Eug. DuPont, member and secretary of the General Council in London, these three sections formed a provisional central committee, welcomed the pardoned Irish Fenians, O'Donovan Rossa and comrades, to the United States. The Fenians were not a little astonished to see representatives of such heterogenous nations so fraternally joined.

Right away, two sections applied for membership from Chicago. In the city of New York and its surroundings, within a
few months, there were formed a great number of sections of all languages and nationalities, German, French, Czech, Irish, American, Scandinavian, etc. In other parts of the country similar things happened, and the furthest of these, New Orleans and San Francisco, had themselves represented in the provisional central committee in good time. The struggle and fall of the Commune gave a special impetus to this movement and the following fact bears witness to the eagerness of the participants and the excellence of the organization: In June, 1871 on a Friday evening a call was issued for a general assembly of New York sections for the following Sunday. The organization had no press organ and no notices were released but on Sunday morning 500 serious men of labor gathered in Dramatic Hall to the astonishment of reporters who asked how that could be possible! Another example is given by the great fire that broke out in Chicago in the fall of the same year. The first news had hardly been made public before a telegraphic money order was dispatched to New Orleans to the provisional central committee for financial support to the party comrades in Chicago who suffered damages. Strongest sympathy was expressed to the victims of the battle of the Commune and support funds for them were sent to Geneva and London, while not a small sum was spent to help Commune refugees in this country.

The “International” was at that time doubtlessly a sort of fad, as the pamphlets and debates in the Congress of the United States demonstrate. Following the push of the time and the pull of their hearts, “reformers” in all places swarmed into the sections of the International Workingmen’s Association and put the workers in a difficult position. The money reformers, the language reformers, the tax reformers—reformers of every class and race, of every type and nuance crept in, chiefly into the so-called American sections and wanted, with their typical tenacity and aggressiveness, to get proselytes for their patented methods. They claimed the right of leadership of the organization quite unabashedly. This amassing of reform cliques was, by the way, not a little aided by the correspondence which J. G. Eccarius held with these people; for Eccarius was at that time Secretary of the General Council for the United States. It was at its worst in Section 12, which had been founded and furthered by the ladies Woodhull and Claflin, eminent exponents of free love and women’s suffrage. The dele-
gates of the workers’ sections in the provisional central committee kept to the labor question, basing themselves firmly on real conditions and economic situations. They endeavored to organize and centralize the working class to struggle for its emancipation. The delegates of the reform sections, led by the ladies Woodhull and Claflin, in Section 12, killed time with empty phrases about women’s emancipation and suffrage, about a universal world language, about social freedom (a euphemistic expression for free love), about all possible kinds of money reform, etc. It was clear to the former that it was not possible to work together beneficially and so they succeeded in dissolving the Provisional Central Committee on November 19, 1871, with 19 votes against 5. They immediately formed a Provisional Federal Council, and one of its first resolutions was only to accept these sections that consisted of at least two-thirds of wage laborers.

To shorten the story! Section 12, the section of the “quacks,” was suspended by the General Council and was later excluded by the General Congress in the Hague; the Provisional Federal Council called a congress of American sections for July 6, 1872 in New York which worked out a statute and dispatched two delegates, a French Commune refugee, and a German, to the Fifth General Congress of the International Workingmen’s Association in the Hague. The Congress at the Hague transferred the seat of the General Council to New York and elected twelve of its members in a truly international association, namely, four Germans, three French, two Irish, one American, one Swede, and one Italian. The story of the Hague Congress does not belong in these reports, but it should be mentioned that the plots by Bakunin, Guillaume and their comrades from the Alliance de la Democratie Socialiste were exposed there. Bakunin and Guillaume were expelled. The new General Council in New York had to use the amputating knife soon again in the case of the Juras-siers, (the sections led by Guillaume and Schwitzgebel in Welsch Switzerland), the Spaniards, and the Belgians. It was bad work, because there were certain thoughts about liquidating the whole business, a task that was made especially burdensome by the ever increasing quarrels within the single truly existing federation, the North American.

Section 1, which was now the name of the Allgemeiner
Deutsche Arbeiterverein of New York, had already begun at the end of 1870 to collect funds to start a newspaper. On February 8, 1873, the first number of Die Arbeiterzeitung came out. It was founded, published, and edited by workers in a truly proletarian spirit, even with proletarian flaws. This was an event that deserved recognition and found it in increasing numbers of readers. The paper was usually in good financial circumstances. Then the crisis came in the fall of 1873 and Section 1 undertook the organization of the unemployed with the help of Die Arbeiterzeitung. This is reported in another place. The task was well planned and noble, unfortunately too noble for the Section’s resources, which were extremely strained. They were, however, unable—with the wide extension of the field—to keep out murky, ambiguous, even positively bad elements, whose influence spread, especially in the previously mentioned Security (or Welfare) Committee. Die Arbeiterzeitung warned against them as before, that a premature and incomplete demonstration would break the thrust of the organization. It was not heeded; the demonstration took place on January 13, 1874, with the well-known result. Die Arbeiterzeitung now fully exposed the doings of the Security Committee and its helpers thus attracting the scorn of the murky elements, the rumblers and the screamers in its own ranks. Through all sorts of machinations this crippled the Federal Council of the North American Federation so that finally the General Council intervened and had to suspend the Federal Council, taking over its tasks. A congress of the North American Federation was called in Philadelphia on April 11, 1874 for this purpose. This Congress vindicated the acts of the General Council, changed a few of the statutes, passed resolutions against a premature electoral campaign, named a central commission, refused to recognize the labors of the General Congress held in Geneva in September 1873 and elected a General Council of seven members. Various malcontents walked out, a few tyrannical undisciplined individuals were expelled, and the work was again taken up with a diminished number but with unweakened courage.

Meanwhile mistrust had saturated Section 1, especially the

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4 In the fourth installment of this series (206-216) Sorge described a protest meeting in Tompkins Square, New York City, that was broken up by the police with the use of violence and which he attributed to the irresponsibility of the Safety Committee.
editorial board of *Die Arbeiterzeitung* which began to grow sensitive about any criticism of its works. Envy and ill-will against the occupants of the few paid positions also became apparent. More or less justified complaints were made by older party comrades outside of New York against the form and content of certain articles. A number of other circumstances worsened this unhappy situation. When the publication board and the control commission of *Die Arbeiterzeitung* wanted to end this state of affairs and accomplish a change, Section 1 pulled a coup in which they took possession of *Die Arbeiterzeitung*, a coup which the other side answered by calling on the bourgeois courts. The result was a further weakening of the Federation and the collapse of *Die Arbeiterzeitung* in March, 1875, a lamentable result of human weaknesses, which even proletarians are heir to.

The chapter on the disputes is handled as briefly as possible, and unfortunately is not yet closed. There would be much more to be reported from this lively period were it not for considerations of space in *Neue Zeit*.

The General Council found itself in a difficult state, but did not bow its head. The organizational bonds of the International Workingmen’s Association were loosened everywhere, the federations were dissolved or fell apart until, besides the numerically weakened North American federation, the sections in the United States, there existed only a few sections in Switzerland. It would have been a meaningful personal relief to the members of the General Council if they could have given up the matter and resigned their offices. But they held true to their duty and to the firm resolution not to allow the trust left with them to fall into unworthy hands; and so they continued certain relations with most European countries until 1876.

In the United States, where the General Council also functioned as the Federal Council, it took part constantly in all working class agitations and tried to re-establish, with considerable success, the trust which had disappeared. The ties established in 1868 and 1869 by Section 1 with large English speaking workers’ groups were at this time well maintained by the Provisional Central Committee and the Federal Council. The General Council carefully nurtured and tried to expand these connections. Thus they came into closer contact with the Mineworkers (especially in
Pennsylvania), the Coopers, the Crispins, the Machinists, the Masons, the Carpenters, the Furniture Workers, the Cigarmakers, etc. The International Furniture Workers Union was founded in 1873 chiefly by members of the International Workingmen’s Association. The International Cigarmakers’ Union also owes its happy growth in no small part to the involvement of the International Workingmen’s Association; likewise the Piano Makers, the Carpenters, the Housepainters, and many other unions. Ties were also finally established with the Eight Hour League of Boston and it can be said that generally the Internationals were industrious organizers.

After the end of the Franco-Prussian War, German immigration grew again considerably, including a significant percentage of German Eisenachers and Lassalleans. Unfamiliar with the language and special institutions of this country, also somewhat encumbered by the megalomania of the new Germans, based on military victory, they were not very pleased with the program of the International which was based on a sober evaluation of the country. They attracted mostly the dissatisfied, those who had left and had been excluded, and founded with them in 1875 a new party, the Social Democratic Party of North America, which hurried to publish a German weekly paper, Der New Yorker Socialdemokrat, and later a weekly paper in English as well, The Socialist. Their success was not great, since they limited themselves to working as much as possible with German methods, copying German patterns. For this reason, attempts made in the fall of 1875 at unification between them and the International failed. While unification in tactics and in principles was far off, the cry for unification—of people—after the model of the recently completed unification of both factions in Germany, became even louder. The General Council, believing it had fulfilled its duty to the European party comrades, called a conference of delegates to the International Workingmen’s Association for July 15, 1876, in Philadelphia (where the World Exposition was taking place on the Centennial of the establishment of the United States) to settle accounts and to be relieved of office. At the same time on July 19, 1876, in the same place, a congress for unification was called by the North American Federation of the International Workingmen’s Association, by the Labor Party of Illinois, and by the
Social Democratic Party of North America.

The delegate congress of the International Workingmen's Association decided to dissolve the International Workingmen's Association and the General Council; the North American Federation put its affairs, treasury, etc., carefully in order. On July 19, 1876, the unification conference met, with two delegates from the Internationals, one delegate from the Labor Party of Illinois, and three from the Social Democrats. One delegate from a group in Cincinnati, who had neither a membership list, nor anything else, was brought in against the Internationals' protest, with pressure from the three Social Democrats, which gave them their majority at the conference. The unification was adopted, program and statutes were worked out, the indebted organs of the Social Democrats were taken over by the new party, which was named "the Labor Party of the United States," and the seat of the executive was placed in Chicago. Before the end of the congress the delegates of the International earnestly warned their successors to center agitation in the New England states, the natural ground for the labor movement in this country, and not to enter an electoral campaign prematurely, recommendations which went unheeded.