

April 9, 1919.

Mr. Ralph M. Masley,  
National Civic Federation Review,  
New York City.

Dear Sir:

An article in the issue of your Review for March 25th, entitled "Radicals Mislead Churches about Labor," contains some sweeping criticisms of the National Catholic War Council reconstruction program.

We have no desire to engage in a controversy over the merits of the program. It speaks for itself and justifies itself. We want, however, to correct a few misconceptions. You say that the program "is only the expression of the opinion of the gentlemen signing the document and has no official sanction." That is not true. The Bishops signed it, not as individuals, but as the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council. As such, they are the authorized representatives of the Catholic Hierarchy.

You find fault with the program for not mentioning the reconstruction proposals of the American Federation of Labor and of the Industrial Conference Board, but neither of these had appeared when the Bishops' program was written. You intimate that the general policies of the American Federation of Labor are well known and should have been noticed. But the Bishops were not discussing the general policies of any organization. They deal with the opinions of others

only in so far as those had found expression in formal programs of reconstruction, and the only documents of this sort that had been issued by labor in the United States up to the time that they wrote were the declarations of the state and city federations which they cited. In the same way they noted the declaration of the National Chamber of Commerce because that was the only reconstruction statement then available from employers, and there are more employers in the National Chamber of Commerce than in any other organization in America.

You complain that the Bishops have made recommendations which are at variance with the policies of the American Federation of Labor. Well, the Bishops were stating their own views and program. While sympathizing with and endorsing the fundamental aims and views of labor, they were no more obliged to adopt all its opinions than those of organized capital.

The heading of your article is not exactly complimentary to the Bishops. They have sufficient intelligence and sufficient knowledge of social thought and conditions to protect themselves against being "misled by radicals."

Your statement that a certain sentence in the program "sounds as if the Committee were somewhat regretful that we are not more ready for revolutionary changes," is an entirely gratuitous bit of interpretation.

In your concluding paragraph, you say that "the churches are all controlled by boards of trustees, made up largely of business men." In the Catholic church the control is in the hands of the Pope and the Bishops.

Very truly yours,

Secretary  
COMMITTEE ON RECONSTRUCTION