

**Interim Report of the Committee on Industrial Classification
to the 2003 General Assembly**

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I. Introduction

Your committee is pleased to report a productive year. Despite some turnover in membership, the committee has accomplished significant progress. It has adopted a set of working rules and procedures, conducted a significant amount of research into the present state of capitalist industry, agreed upon a basic approach to industrial classification, and begun the actual process of revising the union's industrial classification system.

II. Summary of Proceedings Since the Last General Assembly

A. Personnel

At the end of the 2002 General Assembly, the members of the Committee on Industrial Classification were Jon Bekken (Boston, MA, IUB 620); Jim Crutchfield (New York, NY, GMB), acting chairperson; John Hollingsworth (Ottawa, ONT, GMB); Paul Huxtable (Victoria, BC, GMB); and Amy Kwasnicki (Philadelphia, PA, GMB).

Pursuant to the resolution of that Assembly granting the General Executive Board the power to remove inactive members and appoint new ones, Fellow Workers Bekken, Huxtable, and Kwasnicki were removed from the committee, and Breeze Luetke-Stahlman (Chicago, IL, GMB) and Tristan Masat (Eugene, OR, GMB) were appointed.

Subsequently Skip Porter (Milwaukee, WI, GMB) and James Richard Sheldon (Santa Cruz, CA, GMB) were elected to the committee, but were later compelled by weight of other obligations to resign. The committee accepted their

resignations with regret, and with thanks for their contributions. Thereafter, Bruce Arnold (New Bern, NC) was elected to the committee. FW Hollingsworth recently tendered his resignation, which the committee accepted with regret, and with thanks for his nearly two years' participation.

The membership of the committee now stands as follows: Bruce Arnold, Jim Crutchfield, Breeze Luetke-Stahlman, and Tristan Masat. The committee re-elected FW Crutchfield to serve as chairperson. Patrick McGuire is the committee's G.E.B. liaison. The committee may have up to seven members, and it solicits volunteers to fill the three vacant seats.

B. By-Laws

Pursuant to the instructions of the 2002 General Assembly, your committee has adopted by-laws and rules of procedure, which are available for review at <http://www.iww.org/cic/bylaws.html>.

C. Web Site

The committee, with the cooperation of FW Steve Ongerth, has established a web site, which is available to the public at <http://www.iww.org/cic>, and contains a great deal of resource material for the study of modern industry and industrial classification.

D. Timetable

The committee agreed on a two-year timetable for its work, which may be examined at <http://www.iww.org/cic/timetable.html>. While we have not been able to adhere strictly to this timetable, our work is proceeding substantially according to schedule. We will propose a revised timetable shortly after the 2003 General Assembly. We expect to be able to complete our work within the time allotted.

E. IRC

FW Sheldon established an Internet Relay Chat channel for the committee. We decided to hold weekly informal chats and a monthly business meeting via IRC. While participation has been irregular, we have found the chat channel to be a useful resource which allows more fluid discussion than is possible by e-mail.

F. Live Meetings

Most valuable have been our three live meetings in Chicago, thanks to the hospitality of FW Luetke-Stahlman. Although not all members have been able to attend, these meetings have given those who could attend an opportunity to exchange views and reach common ground far more quickly and freely than is possible through internet chat or correspondence.

G. Finances

The committee's final report will include a full accounting of expenses. In 2002-2003 we received a \$200 subsidy from the G.E.B., which was used to reimburse a part of the members' travel expenses.

III. Basic Approach to Industrial Classification

A. Initial Assumptions

1. Adherence to Industrial Organization

The question has been raised in the committee, whether the I.W.W.'s whole approach to organizing may not need re-evaluation: that is, whether industrial unionism and the organization of the union by industry (rather than by

geographical area, or some other criterion), may not have been rendered obsolete by the development of capitalist industry and society over the last hundred years. It has also been suggested that the union does not need an overall scheme of industrial classification, and that workers should be free to establish local or regional organizations of their own design within the I.W.W., according to their own organizing needs and their own views of what will be most effective. While there was agreement that such possibilities need seriously to be examined by the union, the majority of your committee are of the view that those issues are beyond the scope of the committee's present assignment, and that our task is more properly limited to a revision of the existing industrial classification system and structure, rather than a complete reconstruction of the union and its program.

2. Concentration on North America

We decided early on that our work should focus on the economies of North America, as reflected in the North American Industry Classification System, jointly published by the governments of Canada, Mexico, and the United States; and that it should not attempt to develop a plan that would be equally well-suited to other economies. Our sense is that such a task would be unnecessarily difficult, if not impossible, given the different cultural settings and legal frameworks within which those economies have developed. We believe that workers in other lands will be better equipped to develop their own variants when the time comes.

B. General Classification of Industries

Your committee agreed on the following basic conceptual division of industries:

1. Extractive & reductive industries, which produce or gather raw materials from the earth and reduce them to manageable form for further processing or distribution. Examples include coal mines and coke ovens; metal mines and smelters; timber operations and sawmills; fishing operations and canneries; etc.
2. Productive industries, which manufacture raw materials into commodities for sale to consumers. Production may be roughly divided into phases (with much variation by industry and by enterprise), which may be carried on by different enterprises within the same industry:
 - (a) Primary processing--some overlap here with reduction in the previous section, and classification will depend on circumstances in the specific industry. Primary processing puts raw materials into useable form for further manufacture. E.g., spinning fiber into yarn, rolling steel, pelletizing plastic, etc.
 - (b) Component manufacture--takes processed materials and forms them into components for assembly.
 - (c) Assembly--puts components together into finished products.
 - (d) Distribution--completes production by placing commodities in the hands of consumers, in exchange for money.
3. Service industries, which perform actions in support of other industries or for the benefit of the public, but do not significantly produce commodities. Services may be general (*i.e.*, available to all comers, or to all within a broad category of customers) or special (*i.e.*, dedicated to a single industry or narrow category of customers).

There is wide overlap among these divisions, and the lines between them may at times be blurred; but we see no need for bright lines at this point, and believe that such distinctions will best be made by workers on the job, who will know their industries better than we can.

C. General Procedure

Your committee is proceeding according to the following general plan:

1. Discussion of general principles; basic research (substantially complete)
2. Development of provisional list of Industrial Departments (complete)
3. Development of provisional list of Industrial Unions (begun)
4. Submission of provisional list of Industrial Unions to membership for comment (winter 2004)
5. Revision of provisional list in light of members' comments (spring-summer 2004)
6. Final report & recommendations to 2004 General Assembly (due July 2004)
7. Development of "A Worker's Guide to Industrial Classification", i.e., a guide for implementing the revisions proposed by the committee, if they are adopted (fall 2004-spring 2005)

IV. Provisional List of Industrial Departments

Your committee has agreed on the following provisional changes to the List of Industrial Departments as a working draft. We are not seeking the Assembly's approval of it at this point, but welcome comments.

Present list (from Article I, Sec. 3(c) of the Constitution):

1. Department of Agriculture, Land, Fisheries, and Water Products (usually listed as "Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, No. 100")
2. Department of Mining (usually listed as "Department of Mining and Minerals, No. 200")
3. Department of Construction (usually listed as "Department of General Construction, No. 300")
4. Department of Manufacturing and General Production (usually listed as "Department of Manufacture and General Production, No. 400")
5. Department of Transportation and Communication (usually listed as "Department of Transportation and Communication, No. 500")
6. Department of Public Service (usually listed as "Department of Public Service, No. 600")

Provisional revised list:

Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, No. 100
Department of Mining and Minerals, No. 200

Department of Construction, No. 300
Department of Manufacture, No. 400
Department of Information and Communication, No. 500

Department of General Transportation and Distribution, No. 600
Department of Technical and Commercial Services, No. 700
Department of Education and Public Services, No. 800
Department of Personal and Domestic Services, No. 900

The Industrial Reserve Army

Comments

1. Departments 100-400

At this point, changes in Depts. 100-400 are only stylistic. We agreed that the "General" in "General Construction" was meaningless, since there's not another "Department of Special Construction"; and that "General Production" was redundant of "Manufacture". On the other hand, we added "General" to the name of the new

transportation & distribution department in order to emphasize that *special* transportation & distribution (i.e., of one main industry's products) are to be organized with the productive industry whose products are being transported and distributed.

2. Department of Information and Communication

We agreed that the modern economy requires us to have an industrial department that treats information as a raw material for productive industry. The distribution of that industry's products is called communication. This is in part a metaphorical concept, and the metaphor doesn't hold up 100% in all instances; but we agreed that it is still the best way to handle the development of the "information" industry. We also agreed that we shouldn't go overboard on this as the capitalist press has done in hyping the "information economy". It's not a new economy: it's just a development in the old economy.

This new department consists in part of Industrial Unions drawn from the old Dept. of Transportation & Communication and Dept. of Manufacture & General Production, and in part of new unions that reflect the emergence of new information-based industries.

3. Department of General Transportation and Distribution

We agreed that transportation not tied to particular productive industries, i.e., general transportation, is a service, and ought to be organized with general distribution, of which it really is a part. Consequently we added "general" to the name of the department, to emphasize that distribution is part of production, and ought to be organized with production unless it is a general service, moving the products of many different industries.

In a few cases (such as crews of oil tankers who are part of the petroleum industry, strictly speaking), special transport workers may find it most advantageous to organize with general transport workers. We agreed that the union should be reasonably flexible in those instances.

4. New Departments 700-900

These Departments are discussed in detail below, in Section V.

5. Industrial Reserve Army

The Industrial Reserve Army is tentatively conceived of as a semi-independent organization, not unlike the Unemployed Unions organized by the I.W.W. in the past, designed to enfranchise wage workers who are currently unorganized because they are unemployed or they change industries frequently, such as day-laborers. In their unorganized state, these workers often serve the boss class as scabs and strike-breakers, and provide a reserve of replacement workers to keep wages low. The idea of the I.R.A. is to build solidarity among such workers, possibly to establish hiring halls to replace the temporary employment agencies that currently prey on them, and in various ways to help these workers take control of their economic lives and prevent them from being used by the employing class against their fellow workers.

There is disagreement within the committee as to how the I.R.A. should be organized or should function, but a majority agreed that some organization along these general lines is necessary. Details will be worked out during the coming year with the aid, we hope, of the membership.

V. Tentative Reorganization of Existing Department No. 600

A. Introduction

The committee decided to begin its work with Dept. No. 600 for two reasons. First, the committee was formed in response to proposals from the Boston Branches for reorganizing that department, and we felt that Boston deserved

a thoughtful treatment of their proposals as soon as we could give them one. We are not yet ready to make a formal recommendation, but we trust that the following draft will satisfy the Boston Branches that we are seriously addressing the concerns that prompted their proposals.

Second, Dept. 600 has always been problematic for the I.W.W., and the rapid growth of service industries in the North American economies in recent years has made the situation worse. As service industries have proliferated and diversified, the I.W.W.'s provisions for service workers have fallen farther and farther out of step with their actual situation. The committee felt that the revision of the services department was both the most pressing and the most difficult part of our work, and we accordingly decided that it should receive our first attention.

B. Tentative Revision

The committee agreed that the existing Department of Public Service No. 600 needed to be divided. One reason for this was our shared impressions that the majority of current members are in Dept. 600, which unduly concentrates power in that department, and that the probable development of the capitalist economy in the near future is likely to increase that imbalance. For similar reasons, we agreed that education workers and health workers ought to be in separate departments. (We had already determined that the present General Distribution Workers' I.U. No. 660 should be made part of the new Department of General Transportation and Distribution.)

We began by grouping industries that seemed to have the most in common:

- 1: Services that benefit the mind or body of the individual: personal services, household services, hotel/restaurant/catering, health, recreation, arts.
- 2: Services that provide social goods to the broad community: education, public interest, government service.
- 3: Services that mainly serve commercial interests: legal, financial & insurance, general commercial services (job printing, employment agencies, etc.).
- 4: Services that supply and maintain general infrastructure and utilities: utility & sanitation, general repair, engineering/technical/scientific, architectural.

Admittedly, these groupings are somewhat impressionistic, but they seem to provide as rational a breakdown as any, given that there will always be overlap and interconnection among industries.

Having four general services departments (in addition to the Dept. of Transportation & Distribution) would give us ten departments, plus the Industrial Reserve Army, which the committee felt was too many, for aesthetic reasons if nothing else. We therefore decided to combine commercial and technical services, and arrived at the following tentative design:

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES No. 700

Engineering, Technical, and Scientific Workers' IU 710: All workers, not otherwise organized, in enterprises providing engineering, technical, and scientific services. All workers in architectural offices. All workers in research laboratories not attached to educational institutions. All workers for enterprises engaged in the installation, maintenance, and repair of computers and computer networks.

Commercial Service Workers' IU 720: All workers, not otherwise organized, engaged in providing support services to various industries, including commercial laundries; pest-control services; employment agencies; temporary staffing agencies; printing and engraving shops; document copying, storage, and management services; telephone calling centers; telephone answering services; mailbox and mail forwarding services; etc.

Legal Service Workers' IU 730: All workers in law offices, including attorneys who are actual wage-workers. Workers for legal research and brief-writing services; court reporting services; dedicated law publishers, printers, and stationers; and lawyers' document-management services. Courthouse workers. Workers in notarial offices, title settlement offices, and title-search services. Workers employed by commercial arbitration and mediation services. Workers employed by process-serving, bail-bonding, and private investigation services.

General Repair and Maintenance Workers' IU 740: All workers, not otherwise organized, engaged in the repair and maintenance of buildings and building systems, and commercial and domestic appliances and machinery. Workers for janitorial services and commercial landscaping services.

Financial and Insurance Workers' IU 750: All workers in banks, insurance companies, stock and commodities exchanges; all workers for stock and insurance brokerages. All workers engaged in the sale and rental of real estate. All employees of insurance adjusting and surveying firms. All workers in accounting offices.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE No. 800

Educational Workers' IU 810: All workers in educational institutions and museums; workers for historical societies and educational foundations. Workers in industries auxiliary to education, including testing services, educational consulting services, dedicated school bus services, etc.

Public Interest Workers' IU 820: All workers in religious, charitable, public advocacy, and service organizations not otherwise organized. All workers engaged in providing humane services to the public, other than health services.

Utility and Sanitation Workers' IU 830: All workers engaged in the transmission and supply of gas, electricity, water, and steam. All workers for sewer services. All workers engaged in the collection and primary processing of refuse and recyclable materials. All workers engaged in the collection, processing, and disposal of hazardous wastes. All workers in dumps, incinerators, and landfills.

Government Workers' IU 840: All government employees not otherwise organized.

DEPARTMENT OF PERSONAL AND DOMESTIC SERVICE No. 900

Hotel, Restaurant, and Catering Workers' IU 910: All workers in facilities for public accommodation and refreshment, other than those attached to casinos. All workers for catering services not dedicated to serving a particular industry.

Household Service Workers' IU 920: All workers engaged in performing services to private households, including cooks, maids, gardeners, etc. All workers employed by housecleaning services, residential landscaping and gardening services, etc.

Personal Service Workers' IU 930: All workers engaged in performing personal services for the public. All workers in barber shops, beauty salons, and massage services; erotic and escort services; veterinary offices and other animal care centers; funeral parlors, cemeteries and crematoriums; dry-cleaning establishments, small laundries, tailors' shops, etc.

Health Service Workers' IU 940: All workers employed in hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, medical offices, etc. Workers in rehabilitation centers. Workers for medical research services. Workers in medical billing services and other industries auxiliary to health services. Workers in health-maintenance organizations.

Arts & Recreation Workers' IU 950: All workers in amusement parks, ball parks, playgrounds, carnivals, race tracks, casinos, game arcades, and other places of amusement and recreation. All workers in night clubs, music venues, etc.; exotic dance clubs, peep shows, etc.; theaters, concert halls, opera houses, and similar establishments; including associated food and beverage workers. All workers in arts organizations. All workers engaged in auxiliary services to the industry, including catering; talent booking; set, property, and costume production, sale, and rental; location equipment rental; etc. All writers, athletes, graphic artists, and performing artists not organized in other industries.

All of the foregoing is subject to further work by the committee, and, of course, to the comments of the membership.

C. Correspondence to the Boston Proposals

The Boston Branches proposed the following revisions to present Dept. 600:

Public Service Workers IU 650: All workers engaged in the provision of social and public services other than education, health care, and transportation. All workers employed in the public interest sector. All workers engaged in the maintenance of cemeteries, parks, streets, and highways.

(Referred to the Committee on Industrial Classification.)

Utility Workers IU 670: All workers engaged in supply and transmission of gas, electric, water and sewer services, or in the collection and processing of disposable and recyclable materials.

(Adopted.)

Financial and Legal Service Workers IU 690: All workers engaged in the provision of financial, insurance, legal and related services.

(Referred to the Committee on Industrial Classification.)

The committee's tentative revision essentially adopts the Boston Proposals as to utility and sanitation workers. It largely adopts the Boston Proposals as to social service workers, legal workers, and financial workers (who are currently lumped together in a catch-all I.U.), although it separates legal and financial workers into two I.U.s. The maintenance workers formerly in I.U. 670 (but now nowhere, since the 2001 Assembly adopted the Boston Proposal for 670 but not for 650), are usually government workers, so the committee's revision puts most of them in the new Government Workers' I.U. 840. Maintenance workers for private cemeteries are organized with funeral home workers in the new Personal Service Workers' I.U. 930. Street and highway maintenance workers who work for private contractors will be organized with highway construction workers. Park maintenance workers who are not government employees will most likely be organized with forestry workers. Government workers in these fields could also organize with the corresponding workers in private industry, if their interests were the same.

The Boston Proposals would eliminate the Sex Workers' I.U. No. 690, but provide no alternative arrangement for sex workers. The committee's tentative revision organizes some sex workers as personal service workers (those who offer direct contact and sexual release), some as entertainment workers (those who perform primarily for viewing), and some as hotel & restaurant workers (prostitutes exploited by hotels, restaurants, and bars), depending on what industry they work in.

VI. Objectives for the Coming Year

The plan in Section III.C., above, sets out our general objectives for the coming year. We hope, in addition, to consult various members of the union who have experience in particular industries, as we address the revision of the relevant Industrial Unions. We also intend to issue occasional reports on various issues related to our work, as time permits. We invite comments and ideas at any time, and welcome any Fellow Workers who would like to participate in the committee's work. The committee can be contacted through the chairperson at classify@iww.org.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Industrial Classification

By Jim Crutchfield, Chairperson