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TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP, 1897-1962

TABLE 6.—MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL INDEPENDENT UNIONS BY REGION AND STATE, 1960

	Unions ^a	Membership	Unions with Membership not available
New England	198	66,900	17
Maine	14	4,500	1
New Hampshire	6	3,300	0
Vermont	5	1,500	1
Massachusetts	115	39,700	9
Rhode Island	38	5,200	4
Connecticut	20	12,700	2
Middle Atlantic	552	198,400	41
New York	243	98,200	15
New Jersey	128	38,800	10
Pennsylvania	181	61,400	16
East North Central	381	140,400	28
Ohio	131	50,200	14
Indiana	53	15,100	1
Illinois	88	53,100	4
Michigan	64	8,800	4
Wisconsin	45	13,200	5
West North Central	80	15,700	21
Minnesota	12	1,300	2
Iowa	13	1,000	4
Missouri	42	11,000	12
North Dakota	1	200	0
South Dakota	0	0	0
Nebraska	1	100	1
Kansas	11	2,100	2
South Atlantic	68	46,000	14
Delaware	3	1,900	1
Maryland	21	7,100	1
District of Columbia	4	6,100	0
Virginia	13	16,300	2
West Virginia	10	11,600	5
North Carolina	4	800	1
South Carolina	3	300	0
Georgia	4	300	1
Florida	6	1,600	3
East South Central	30	6,700	3
Kentucky	13	3,700	0
Tennessee	10	2,100	2
Alabama	6	800	1
Mississippi	1	100	0
West South Central	108	28,000	12
Arkansas	1	200	0
Louisiana	40	10,400	4
Oklahoma	7	1,600	1
Texas	60	15,800	7
Mountain	22	3,000	12
Montana	6	600	1
Idaho	0	0	3
Wyoming	3	500	2
Colorado	3	100	2
New Mexico	2	800	0
Arizona	1	100	1
Utah	7	900	1
Nevada	0	0	2
Pacific	164	44,100	16
Washington	13	10,000	2
Oregon	16	2,000	5

TABLE 6.—CONTINUED

California	128	31,200	8
Alaska	3	200	0
Hawaii	4	700	1
United States	1,603	549,200	164

^a Excludes those for which membership was not computed.

independent unions. The majority are of the single-employer type. In addition to those for which membership figures could be constructed, there were 164 unions whose financial reports were either not available or did not include sufficient data from which to compute figures.

Our estimates of membership of local and regional independent unions are based on reported dues receipts divided by per capita dues, obtained from the files of the United States Bureau of Labor-Management Reports and the New York State Department of Labor. Since the BLMR requires filings only by unions in interstate commerce, the New York State reports were examined in order to find additional local independent unions. In this way, we were able to add nearly 100 unions, not listed in the federal files, with a combined membership in excess of 18,000. It seems certain, therefore, that a complete census of local independent unions would raise both the number and membership above that shown here.

II Sources and Methods of Deriving Union Membership Statistics Since 1934

Although there are a variety of ways of defining union membership, for measurement purposes we have adhered, whenever possible, to the definition that only those paying dues to a union or for whom dues are paid to a federation such as the AFL, the CIO, or the AFL-CIO are members. Consequently, to the fullest possible extent, in this report we have reported union membership on a dues-paying basis.

This concept of membership has the merit of greater precision than some other concepts, but it is not ideal for all purposes. For example, to a union, total membership may include those paying regular dues, both those in arrears and those up to date in their payments; the unemployed, whether or not they pay any dues; those on strike, honorary members, persons in the armed forces, retired persons, and sick, disabled, or inactive individuals. All or many

of those categories may be regarded and reported by a union as membership in good standing. Such figures, therefore, show all whom the union regards as attached members, even though several of the aforementioned categories include persons who may not be in the civilian labor force.

Those holding withdrawal cards are not counted as members by this study. Withdrawal cards show that a member was in good standing when he left the union; therefore he is permitted to apply for reinstatement rather than required to apply as a new member.

For purposes of collective bargaining, a union may report on the number it represents. This group differs from total membership. Typically, representation is larger than membership since it includes persons whom the union represents, but who are not members of the union. However, it also excludes members not in a represented unit and whom the union does include in its count of total membership.

Newly organized units may not be charged dues until a collective bargaining agreement is signed. This may show up as a lag in membership, as we measure it, but our count will include the newly organized once an agreement is signed and dues are collected.

For such vital purposes of determining voting rights at conventions (the source of all constitutional authority), unions allot representation on the basis of membership dues received from locals. Thus, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, while defining a member as in good standing even though no dues are paid for 39 weeks, nevertheless changes its definition to a current dues-paying basis to count members for convention purposes. Article 2, Section 3, of the Constitution of 1962 states that Local Unions ". . . in order to be entitled to representation at the convention . . . shall have paid up in *full all their per capita taxes . . . and other liabilities to the I.L.G.W.U. up to the first day of the month preceding the holding of the convention.*" (Italics supplied.)

The IBEW Constitution of 1962 states that "Each Local Union shall be entitled to a *per capita* tax vote on "A" and "BA" members; that is, *one vote* for each member in good standing three calendar months prior to the first of

the month in which the International Convention is held." (Italics supplied.)

The Steelworkers base convention representation upon the average of the paid and exonerated membership of the local union. The UAW allots representation at conventions by the *average* number of monthly per capita taxes paid by the Local Union to the International Union. It follows, therefore, that unions, for enumeration purposes at conventions, rely primarily on the average membership paying full per capita dues, as we have done in this paper.

For the concept of membership adopted here, we should like to estimate the number of active members who are regularly paying either full-time or part-time dues, plus those who may temporarily not be required to pay dues because of a strike, unemployment, or other reasons recognized by the union. Honorary and retired membership ought to be excluded since neither category of members is directly involved in the economic activities of a union and, at least in the case of retired members, is not in the labor force either.

The method actually used, where dues receipts were available, was to divide the receipts by full-time dues per capita. This method can lead to an underestimate of a union's membership as defined above. Thus, should there be a prolonged strike during which dues are not collected, the estimate will underreport the membership for the period. Furthermore, union reports of dues receipts sometimes include amounts obtained at reduced rates from unemployed, retired, or honorary members, and also include dues paid for only part of a year. But, since we divide the annual total by the full-time rate, the estimate will be less than the total number of individuals who were members at some time during the year, though it will exceed the number who paid a full year's dues. Bias arising from the inclusion of initiation fees in total receipts, which would result in an overestimate of membership by our method, is rare since all financial reports filed with the Department of Labor and most of those privately published by unions separate fees from dues.

A special problem of estimating membership would appear to arise in the case of those unions which charge different dues rates for

journeymen and apprentices. Typically, such a dues structure characterizes unions in the printing and building trades. However, union financial reports frequently show dues income by class of membership, so that it is possible to estimate the number in each class and combine the results to obtain the total. Moreover, in organizations that apportion their dues receipts among a variety of funds, where the allocation for one or more funds is uniform for all classes of membership, estimates of total membership can be derived from each of the allocated funds and serve to check one another.

An illustration of the procedure of allocating dues receipts among funds is provided by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, one of the ten largest unions, which has reported its dues receipts by allocation annually since 1956.

As shown by the tabulation below, the figures computed from different fund allocations for the IBEW check precisely or closely for all years except two, 1958 and 1959, when the membership estimated from the General Fund allocations differed from those computed from the Defense and Convention Funds. The differences arose because the union increased its dues and allocation for the General Fund, but the effective date local unions began paying the increases varied from the nominally effective dates, so that the membership figures in these two years did not tally with the figures derived from the other two funds. No change, it must be emphasized, was made in the allocation for the Defense or Convention Funds throughout the period shown in the tabulation.

	General Fund	Defense Fund	Convention Fund
1956	623,649	623,649	623,649
1957	669,502	669,502	669,502
1958	688,267 ^a	694,798	694,798
1959	678,785 ^a	684,645	684,645
1960	690,035	690,021	690,021
1961	689,715	689,714	689,714
1962	710,198	710,197	710,197

^a In these years, the per capita dues and allocation to the General Fund were increased, but the effective dates of the changes are uncertain.

From time to time, unions with more than a single dues rate varied their financial reports and did not always report the allocation as just shown. When this happened, we estimated the weighted average dues rate for the entire mem-

bership for the latest year in which the allocation was available. That is, we divided the membership obtained by the allocation method into total receipts to get a weighted-average dues rate for the entire membership. We could then use the relation between the weighted average and the full-time dues rate to adjust the latter in the years for which the allocation was not reported. The weighted average was revised periodically when union reports became available, thus taking account of changes in the membership composition of a union.

An example of this situation is provided by the Carpenters Union. In 1959 and 1960 we estimated its membership on the basis of average dues. Subsequent to the completion of our estimates, we obtained financial data showing the allocation of dues for the union's publication, *The Carpenter*, for 1959 and 1960. Since this allocation was a uniform amount for all members, dividing it into the receipts would yield the desired result.

A comparison of these results with our original estimates follows:

	Estimate from Allocation to <i>The Carpenter</i>	Original Estimate	Difference
1959	761,100	774,700	13,600
1960	735,300	756,600	21,300

As the comparison shows, our original estimates were higher, but exceed the improved ones by less than two per cent in 1959 and under three per cent in 1960.

The Carpenters' data on allocation carried through to 1961. For 1962, it was necessary to estimate membership by the average dues rate for all members. This figure was obtained by dividing dues receipts in 1961 by the average membership in that year; since the dues structure had not changed, this amount was used to estimate average dues-paying membership for 1962. Changes in dues for this and other unions were traced through convention proceedings, constitutions, and by correspondence.

A few unions, such as the Broadcast Employees and Technicians, the Glass and Ceramic Workers, and the Flint Glass Workers, charge a percentage of earnings as membership dues. In such cases, the unions' per capita payments to the federation (AFL, CIO, or AFL-CIO) were used to measure membership.

Our estimates of aggregate union membership include a degree of double-counting, because an individual may belong to more than one union. However, since the practice is concentrated in relatively few occupations, such as building, railway transportation, entertainment, and longshoring, and because we use full-time dues to derive our estimates, the overall effect is probably negligible.

Likewise, the official figures of employees in nonfarm establishments involve some double-counting because the same person may be employed by more than one establishment. Since the extent of double-counting is probably greater in employment than in union membership, the percentage of organization (shown in table 2) might be slightly biased downward. However, though the level may be affected to a slight extent, the movements from year to year are probably even less affected.

In contrast, since the figures on the total labor force do not involve double-counting, the ratio of membership to this concept of labor supply (table 2) may be slightly biased upward. Again, however, the annual movements are not likely to be affected appreciably.

The three series — labor force, nonfarm employees, and union membership — also differ in other respects. Annual figures on the labor force are averages of monthly estimates of the noninstitutional population 14 years of age and over who may be described as at work, seeking work, or self-employed. The monthly figures are derived from a sample of 35,000 households reporting their activity or status in the calendar week which contains the twelfth day of the month. Data on employees on nonagricultural payrolls, excepting the federal government, refer to persons who receive pay for any part of the pay period ending nearest to the fifteenth of the month. For the federal government, the figures relate to those having positions on the last day of the calendar month. Intermittent workers are included in the count provided they rendered some service during the month. Proprietors, self-employed, unpaid family workers, and household domestic workers are excluded, but salaried officials of corporations are included. The figures are reported monthly by a large number of estab-

lishments, and annual averages are derived from the monthly estimates.

Union membership figures, in contrast, are derived from financial flows covering an entire year. The annual averages of the labor force or employees on nonfarm payrolls are derived from samples or reporting periods.

The basic source of union dues is, of course, the employed union member; therefore our estimates, after deducting Canadian membership, may be compared with the total number employed. Since very few agricultural employees or self-employed persons are union members, there is a negligible distortion in comparing net union membership (Canadian members excluded) with the number of non-agricultural employees.

Seasonal changes in membership are "ironed out" in the annual average. Thus, since our figures are not monthly or quarterly, short-term changes in membership during the year are, by the nature of the figures, averaged for the year.

A more difficult problem is encountered in dealing with dues of unemployed union members. However, judging from queries to selected unions and according to the National Industrial Conference Board's *Handbook of Union Government, Structure and Procedures*, few unions levy dues on unemployed members. Hence relatively few unemployed members are included in our estimates. For this reason, it is appropriate to compare our membership estimates with employment totals, excluding the unemployed.

Some unions in the building and metal trades have special dues payments for members who become unemployed or go on strike. These arrangements maintain the members' "good standing" and rights to union-financed retirement, disability, and insurance benefits. Apparently, few unions keep detailed records. One which does and which considerably made its latest estimates by type of membership available to us is the International Association of Machinists. This union's figures are compared in the next tabulation with our series computed from per capita receipts from 1951 to 1962. Prior to 1951, we relied on the IAM's reported figures.

TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP, 1897-1962

	Regular Dues (1)	Unemployed Dues and on Strike (2)	Total Paying Dues (3)	NBER Figures (4)	Difference (3)-(4) (5)	Difference (5) (4)
1951	563,500	22,200	585,700	548,500	37,200	6.8%
1952	668,400	30,100	698,500	645,400	53,100	8.2
1953	712,500	33,500	746,000	746,800	- 800	-1
1954	696,700	55,400	752,100	715,800	36,300	5.1
1955	689,800	43,600	733,400	700,100	33,300	4.8
1956	760,500	41,500	802,000	771,400	30,600	4.0
1957	812,000	47,800	859,800	833,000	26,800	3.2
1958	722,400	80,400	802,800	751,900	50,900	6.8
1959	722,800	57,500	780,300	716,700	63,600	8.9
1960	726,000	48,200	774,200	686,800	87,400	12.7
1961	686,200	46,600	732,800	665,700	67,100	10.1
1962	699,200	40,200	739,400	666,300	73,100	11.0

Stamps issued by the International Union to its locals provide the source of the membership figures reported by the Machinists for those paying regular dues, those paying special dues because of unemployment, or those paying no dues because of an authorized strike. Actual receipts for the stamps can and do differ, and appear to account for part of the discrepancy between the union's total membership and our own.

Thus, from 1959 to 1962, inclusive, we computed membership from the strike fund, rather than total per capita receipts, because there is a standard deduction allotted to this fund from the per capita of *all* regular members. (Article VII, Section 4, Constitution of the IAM effective April 1, 1958.) This allocation began in 1958. Prior to 1959, we computed the Machinists' membership from total dues receipts.

Thus the IAM's regular dues-paying membership should be the same as our figure, provided stamps issued result in equivalent income. However, the IAM's reported membership of those paying regular dues exceeds our estimates in each of the four years. While the difference is small in 1959, it was almost six per cent in 1960 and nearly five per cent in 1962. Perhaps there is a lag in payments to the International Office; but whatever the reason, it seems evident that figures derived from stamps issued by the International and dues received by this body can and do differ.

With respect to the unemployment stamps, the Secretary-Treasurer of the union pointed out at the last convention of the IAM that financial secretaries of local unions were issuing these stamps without prior determination that all claims were valid. Since the Landrum-Grif-

fin Act requires equal rights and uniform treatment of members, and since failure to fulfill these requirements makes the union vulnerable to court suit by aggrieved parties, the Secretary-Treasurer of the IAM has sought to eliminate invalid claims for unemployment stamps.⁸

The union's constitution limits the issuance of unemployment stamps to six months unless special authorization is granted. If this rule has been ignored, then figures based on stamps will be above the actual average of unemployed allowable under the IAM's constitution. Judging from the number of revisions of membership reports by the IAM, the union has continuously sought to improve its records, and usually the revision has reduced the membership, not only of the unemployed, but the total as well.

The Auto Workers and Teamsters appear to use the same dues-paying concept as ours or one similar to it. Thus the Auto Workers have only regular dues, and members working at least forty hours in a month are expected to pay them at the full-time rate. Apparently, a similar reasoning applies to the Teamsters, since both unions have usually reported membership to the BLS that is very close to, and at times identical with, our own figures as shown below.

	Auto Workers		Teamsters	
	NBER	BLS	NBER	BLS
1954	1,240,000	1,239,000	1,233,000	1,231,000
1956	1,321,000	1,321,000	1,369,000	1,368,000
1958	1,026,000	1,027,000	1,418,000	1,418,000
1960	1,136,000	1,136,000	1,481,000	1,484,000

Similarly, neither the Steelworkers nor the Carpenters collect dues from unemployed members. According to the Steelworkers, members may tender dues voluntarily, but no record is available of those who do.

Over all, the following conclusions may be made about the problem of measuring unemployed membership and its importance for our two series on extent of organization. First, no sizable and reliable body of figures exists. Second, only a few unions have a basis for measuring unemployed membership, and therefore would meet the definition we have used in this

⁸ *Proceedings of the 25th Grand Lodge Convention, International Association of Machinists (Sept. 6-15, 1960), 364-365.*

report. Being small in number, their over-all effect on our figures is likely to be minimal. However, in years of high unemployment the effect is likely to be larger than in other years, and this may explain, in part, the tendency for our membership figures to decline in recession years.

Problems of the comparability of figures estimated from financial reports arise out of differences in fiscal periods, but these are probably not serious. Many unions use the calendar year and others the twelve months ending June 30; relatively few use other fiscal years. In our reporting we have regarded any fiscal year ending June 30 or later in the year as belonging to that calendar year. If the fiscal year ends before June 30, the figure is included with the preceding calendar year. Differences in reporting periods may cause some problems of comparability for a given year and may introduce some leads or lags in the membership of a particular union. Most reports, however, are on a calendar basis.

For purposes of accuracy and comparability, we have endeavored, wherever possible, to derive our figures from the dues receipts of individual unions, or, where receipts were not available, from payments by affiliated unions to the AFL, CIO, or AFL-CIO. The results, therefore, are annual averages of fully paid membership. Where financial reports were unavailable, we have relied on other sources, such as letters from the union, officers' and committee reports at union conventions, the Bureau of Labor Statistics' directories, and occasionally monographs on particular unions.⁹ In *Ebb and Flow in Trade Unionism*, Wolman measured membership by relying primarily on the annual report of the Executive Council of the AFL. Where the figures understated or overstated the membership of a union, he used "series supplied by the union itself but in every instance subjected to extensive examination and check."¹⁰

Table 7 shows the sources of membership information in 1940, 1950, and 1960. As indicated, the proportion of membership derived

⁹ Detailed notes on each union's sources of membership will be found in Appendix Tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.

¹⁰ L. Wolman, *Ebb and Flow in Trade Unionism* (New York: NBER, 1936), 14.

TABLE 7.—SOURCES OF STATISTICS ON UNION MEMBERSHIP, 1940-1960 (PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP)

	1940	1950	1960
AFL and CIO			
Dues receipts of national or international union	27.3	64.4	73.5
Dues paid to AFL, CIO, or AFL-CIO	18.3	6.3	7.5
Other ^a	24.8	11.6	1.6
Unaffiliated			
Dues receipts	—	2.8	8.9
Other ^a	29.6	14.9	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Subtotals, all unions			
Financial data	45.6	73.5	89.9
Other ^a	54.4	26.5	10.1

^a BLS directories, officers' and committee reports, letters from union, or other estimate.

from dues receipts divided by annual per capita dues rose sharply from 27 per cent in 1940 to 82 per cent in 1960. If the proportion of membership estimated from payments to the labor federation is added to that computed from union dues receipts, the proportion of membership information obtained from financial data rises to about 90 per cent in 1960. Correspondingly, the proportion of figures derived from the BLS and union reports and letters declined from about 54 per cent in 1940 to ten per cent in 1960.

Different sources of membership introduce the problem of comparability of the results and therefore raise the question of whether trends in the series are affected. The change in sources from predominantly nonfinancial to financial sources occurred about 1948, when most unions began filing reports under the Taft-Hartley Act. (These became available to us about a decade later, after passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act.)

Consequently, if the figures obtained from nonfinancial sources exceed those computed from dues income, then the growth of unions from 1933 to 1948 may be somewhat understated by our figures, as compared with what they would have shown had dues income data been available to the same extent in 1933 as in 1948. Likewise, the decline from 1948 to 1962 would be slightly smaller than our figures show.

It should be noted, however, that the swings in total membership parallel in large degree

those of the ten largest unions. Hence, since for this group financial data or other consistent information are available for a longer period than for most unions, the changes in the level and trends of total membership are probably less affected than the foregoing discussion might initially suggest. For five of the ten unions, financial sources go back to 1940 or earlier; another, the Steelworkers, begin in 1942; the Teamsters in 1947; and the three remaining, the IBEW, the Machinists, and the UMW, in the fifties.

If the list of largest unions whose membership is consistently computed from dues income is increased to include such important and industrially representative unions as the Building Service Employees, the Clothing Workers, the Chemical Workers, the Musicians, the Painters, the Retail Clerks, the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (and its successor, the IUE), the Rubber Workers, and the Textile Workers Union of America, there is less likelihood of bias in the trends due to the change in sources.

Examination of unions with a consistent source from 1935 to 1948 and financial reports thereafter, such as the Teamsters, the Bricklayers, the Meat Cutters, and the Railway Clerks, shows no sharp breaks when figures computed from financial information begin. In fact, none of the foregoing showed a decline as a result of the switch in source. The Teamsters' reports on membership for 1935 to 1947 are almost certainly annual averages of dues-paying membership, as comparisons of computed and reported figures for a later period indicate.

Biases stemming from a union's per capita payments to a federation arise from underpayments (to conserve outlays), overpayments (to magnify its voting power at a federation convention), and unchanging payments (apparently because a rough estimate is all that is required). Variations in a union's figures based on payments to a federation and on its dues income may also arise from differences between the union's fiscal year and that of the federation.

Of the foregoing problems, the most serious, historically, have been underpayments and

constant payments.¹¹ An important example of the first was the Teamsters Union, while the Carpenters have both over- and underpaid (table 8). However, in most instances since 1948 we have been able to substitute independent estimates made from the union's own financial reports.

TABLE 8.—COMPARATIVE ESTIMATES OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CARPENTERS AND THE TEAMSTERS UNIONS FOR SELECTED YEARS, 1935-1960

	Carpenters		Teamsters	
	Voting Representation at AFL or AFL-CIO Convention	Appendix Table A-1	Voting Representation at AFL or AFL-CIO Convention	Appendix Tables A-1, A-3
1935	200,000	128,800	137,000	161,900
1940	300,000	233,400	393,700	478,000
1945	600,000	470,800	625,000	644,500
1950	600,000	716,900	625,000	1,057,400
1955	750,000	804,800	1,229,800	1,291,100
1960	730,800	756,600	a	1,480,600

^a Expelled, December 1957.

A constant pattern of payments to a federation has often been characteristic of smaller unions. For example, the United Garment Workers has paid on 40,000 members to the AFL and to the AFL-CIO ever since 1938. However, access to Department of Labor files on union financial reports has enabled us to replace this figure from 1949 to 1962 with more accurate figures ranging from 25,000 to 34,000.

Both the AFL and CIO receipts from affiliated unions yield a lower membership than that derived from totaling the membership of individual unions, the procedure we have employed in this report. For example, using the financial reports of the CIO, available from 1949 to 1955, when it merged with the AFL, we find that our figures exceed those computed from the dues receipts of the federation in every year (table 9).

Local union payments to national unions have not to date been studied, so we do not know yet whether their per capita payments to the parent union are reasonably accurate. A procedure for checking this would be to compare dues received by the local with its per capita payments to the national. Such a check

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12-14, for a discussion of the problem of over- and underpayments of AFL affiliates.

TABLE 9. — COMPARATIVE ESTIMATES OF TOTAL CIO MEMBERSHIP, 1949-1955

	Estimate from Table A-2 (1)	Estimate from Per Capita Re- ceipts of CIO (2)	Difference (1) - (2) (3)
1949	4,314,000	3,945,200	368,800
1950	3,712,800	3,470,200	242,600
1951	4,182,900	3,901,900	281,000
1952	4,261,400	4,155,700	105,700
1953	4,837,900	4,384,100	453,800
1954	4,494,400	4,409,500	84,900
1955	4,608,300	4,108,100	500,200

could not be made, however, for inclusion in this paper.

The primary reason for the recent increase in financial sources of information is the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959. Under that law, all unions in interstate commerce except those representing government employees and employees of government-owned corporations are required to file financial reports showing, among numerous other items, the receipts from dues.

Under the Taft-Hartley Act (1947), unions wishing to avail themselves of the facilities of the National Labor Relations Board were also required to file financial reports, but these were kept confidential by order of successive Secretaries of Labor. However, after passage of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act in 1959, the Secretary of Labor opened these files to the public, and we were enabled to revise and improve many of our figures back to 1948.

Finally, another problem in measuring union membership is the determination of which labor organizations to include. This difficulty applies only to a small number of organizations at this time, but the issue may become more important.

For example, the figures here do not include the membership of the American Nurses Association, a group which has apparently evolved into an agency for collective bargaining. The national endorses bargaining and some of its state units have begun to bargain. Both national and state units also file reports with the Bureau of Labor-Management and Welfare Reports. The membership of the Nurses Association in 1962, estimated from per capita receipts, was 37,000.

Two other large groups which may be moving toward collective bargaining (but are not included in our figures) are the state and local government employee associations. An incomplete survey covering thirty such groups estimated their dues-paying membership at 392,000 as of July 1, 1961.¹²

III Comparison with Bureau of Labor Statistics Estimates of Membership

The only other estimates of total union membership covering the period since the termination of Wolman's series in 1934 are those of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These differ from ours in methods of derivation and results.

Two general methods have been used by the BLS. Prior to 1951, the Bureau derived its series by aggregating reports of the AFL and the CIO, to which were added estimates of independent membership derived from a number of sources.¹³ Membership by individual union in the BLS series is therefore not available before 1951. Since 1951, the BLS has compiled an annual series on total membership based primarily on replies of individual unions to biennial questionnaires. BLS figures of membership by union became available in 1951 and thereafter in alternate years beginning in 1954.

A comparison in chart 3 and table 10 of our membership series with that of the BLS from 1933 to 1962 reveals that, except in 1933, 1934, 1935, and 1948, the BLS figures are consistently higher. As noted, BLS figures on membership by union which can be examined to account for the wide variations in the two series are available only since 1951. During this period, the

¹² Joseph Krislov, "The Independent Public Employee Association: Characteristics and Functions," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, XV (July, 1962), 511-512.

¹³ See notes to Table E-1 in the *Handbook of Labor Statistics, 1950, Bulletin 1016*, and the *Supplement, 1951* to that handbook. The BLS figures prior to 1935 (extending back to 1897) were derived by combining estimates based upon per capita payments of affiliated unions to the AFL with Wolman's figures for independent unions. Because the per capita payments to AFL generally yield lower estimates than the aggregated reports of individual unions (see section II, above), the BLS series on total membership is lower than Wolman's totals in every year from 1897 to 1922, higher from 1923 to 1932, and lower in 1933 and 1934. Note, however, that the BLS included in the membership of independent unions Wolman's estimates for the Trade Union Unity League, 1929-1934, which Wolman did not include in his totals.