The Right to Work
NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Published By The
NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEE
125-B Cafritz Bldg., Washington 6, D. C.

Vol. II, No. 7 September-October, 1956

NEVADA VOTERS AT THE CROSS ROADS FREEDOM OR COMPULSION?

The issues are clear-cut and the voters of Nevada must decide the question at the ballot box. It is not a question of political parties, peace or war between the East and West, the Suez canal, or any of the other issues filling the air waves in the current political campaign. No, it is simply the basic question of whether or not the men and women, citizens of Nevada, shall have the right of earning a living without the payment of fees, dues and assessments to a private organization, the labor union.

Nevada is unique in that it has no laws (Little Wagner or Taft-Hartley Acts) regulating union activity or curbing abuses of the membership, business or the public, except the Right to Work law, passed in 1952, which simply protects the citizen in his or her right to JOIN or NOT JOIN a labor union.

TWO QUESTIONS FACE THE VOTERS

Question No. 1 would repeal the Right to Work Law, removing the protection now granted. If the citizens vote YES they will no longer be free to choose, but MUST JOIN the union. Business will also be faced with unrestricted organizational picketing and the vicious secondary boycott.

Question No. 2 – and here is the real "stinger" – would make it a part of the State Constitution that labor unions could go the limit in any manner they desired. First, they could carry on concerted action, which simply means that they would be free to use organizational strikes and secondary boycotts to force their terms on all business. Second, they could make membership in the union a condition of employment, meaning no card no work, it mattering not whether the union be Commie or Goon controlled. Third, and really capping the climax, it would provide that the unions could do all these things and that such shall not be denied, impaired, or abridged by law or by any department of the State Government. If the citizens vote YES on this one the Labor Bosses will be in position to make the Russian leaders look like pikers as to their power.

We don't believe the free people of Nevada will fall into such a trap.

* * *

MINE UNION ACTS AGAINST WILDCAT STRIKES—The United Mine Workers of America decreed fines and other penalties for members who take part in, or promote, wildcat strikes in the coal fields, at its quadrennial convention held in Cincinnati, Ohio recently, according to report in the Wall Street Journal.

AMERICANS MUST HAVE THE RIGHT, BUT NOT BE COMPELLED TO JOIN LABOR UNIONS

The U.M.W. leadership put local unions on notice that they will be subject to discipline and penalties for participation in unauthorized walkouts and said they will suffer double penalties if they picket other mines not engaged in the dispute. This latter was aimed at discouraging the motorcades of roving pickets which frequently in recent years have moved into neighboring areas to close down mines not directly involved.

Local union officers giving aid and comfort to unwarranted stoppages, or who are guilty of negligence in their failure to prevent them, also, were threatened with disciplinary action by the union's executive board.

John L. Lewis, the 76-year-old, though still able and fiery union chieftian, held out a bright future for the miners he has led for 37 years in a keynote speech before the convention, already cheered by reports of a $2-a-day wage increase. Mr. Lewis vigorously assailed the Tennessee Valley authority for their coal buying policy, hitting again as he has at past conventions at the Taft-Hartley law.

While we cannot agree with Mr. Lewis in his position on the Taft-Hartley law, we do commend him and the United Mine Workers of America for this forward step toward removing the evils of wildcat strikes and the harassing lawlessness of the motorcades of roving pickets. Public opinion, aroused by these acts, has no doubt done more to adversely affect the organizing efforts than has the Taft-Hartley Act or Right to Work laws.

* * *

SHADES OF RED RIDING HOOD!—Noting the anguished cries of the labor leaders against the Taft-Hartley law it has been commonly assumed that most of the law cases filed against labor are by employers, particularly the larger corporations. To many people this pictures these leaders as Knights in shining armor shielding the poor worker from the Big Bad Wolf of Big Business. However, the annual report of the National Labor Relations Board for 1955, released recently, disproves this. More of the cases are filed by employees.

Employees filed 1,095 unfair labor practice charges against unions in 1955, compared with 872 the previous year and 563 the year before that. The 1955 total was 60 per cent of all filings against unions. Employers filed 615 or 35 per cent. Most of the cases alleged restraint and coercion of employees in the exercise of their statutory right to engage in or refrain from union activity and discrimination against employees who refused to join a union. In 102 out of 157 decertification elections conducted by the Board, employees voted to get rid of their unions and in 12 out of 20 deauthorization elections they voted to rescind union shop contract clauses entered into by their union.

Before the Taft-Hartley Act was passed employees had no means of protecting themselves from union abuses. Is it any wonder that so many of the workers are actively supporting right-to-work laws? Perhaps they detect the long sharp teeth of the real wolf through the shining armor of their so very ardent protecting Knight.

* * *

CHECKMATE! 'TAINT SO—Last year the opponents of Right to Work loudly charged that such laws lowered the economy. This Committee definitely laid these charges low in the survey titled "Do Right to Work Laws Hurt or Help the Economy?", proving that the 12 states having Right to Work laws for the period 1947 through 1953 easily matched or outstripped the national average gains in non-farm employment, number of firms in operation, growth of civilian population, per capita earnings, total income payments to individuals, expenditures for new construction, retail sales, bank savings accounts and private automobile registration. (Copies of this report available on request.)

They now claim that Right to Work laws prevent them from organizing and securing new members. However, according to the thirty-sixth annual report of the National Bureau of Economic Research, (261 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N.Y.) this

charge is also without foundation. All of the states with a Right to Work law, with the exception of Iowa, North Dakota and Virginia, exceeded the national average. This report (available on request to the Bureau) shows that trade union membership increased in the period 1939 – 1953 in the United States as a whole 148.8 per cent. In this same period the percentage increase in Right to Work states was:

State	Increase (per cent)	State	Increase (per cent)
So. Carolina	307.4	Arkansas	171.6
Mississippi	284.6	Utah	167.1
Georgia	280.4	Tennessee	163.8
Arizona	257.1	Alabama	163.4
Nevada	246.0	Nebraska	153.1
Texas	239.2	Virginia	128.2
No. Carolina	226.1	No. Dakota	119.0
Florida	211.7	Iowa	115.4
So. Dakota	185.2		

Admittedly other factors are involved, such as present and past rates of industrialization and unionization in the various states. However, it is difficult to see how advocates of compulsory unionism can validly claim that state right-to-work laws mean death to unions and prevent carrying on organization campaigns.

* * *

NEW COMMITTEE ORGANIZED—Formation of the Morgan County Right to Work Committee was completed at meeting held in Decatur, Alabama on September 25. A temporary committee, composed of three representatives of local business and four workers, was appointed to prepare the Constitution and By-Laws and arrange for the election of permanent officers. Mr. William H. Hogan, of Hartselle, one of the worker members, was selected as Chairman.

Representing the National Committee at the meeting were Paul S. Russell, Decatur; P. M. French, Nashville, Tennessee, both members of the Board of Directors; and W. T. Harrison, Executive Secretary, of the Washington office.

This Committee will be affiliated with the National Committee and plans an extensive county-wide campaign for the protection and strengthening of the State Right to Work Law. It is also planned to set up similar committees in other counties in Alabama.

Alabama residents interested should write to Mr. William H. Hogan, North Sparkman Street, Hartselle, Alabama.

* * *

UNION FLOUTS THE LAW AND MAKES IT STICK—Sounds incredible? Perhaps so, but that is one of the headlines in the Washington Daily News on October 3, 1956, in the heart of the Nation's Capital.

Under this headline the News reports that a National Labor Relations Board Examiner here in Washington has revealed that freedom suffers from the same dark blot in Texas as it does on the gangster ridden East river docks of New York. It is well known that gangsters control the New York docks and that the man who fights them doesn't get a chance to work. Now an NLRB trial examiner's report shows that the man who fights them on the docks in Houston, Texas doesn't get any further.

A. M. Clay, J. A. Garza, W. J. Nemeth, Robert Knowles and J. D. Williamson of Houston tried to buck the gangster-ridden International Longshoreman's Association in Texas, and found Houston's docks just as controlled by the gangsters as is New York's. The NLRB examiner found that the union simply had control of their lives. It has its contacts with the company associations and had control of all hiring. These men were "outsiders". They didn't belong to the union. But they got to work because there was a lot of work to do. (For years the union had limited its membership to 400.) But, when a ship was to be unloaded, they were the last on the list.

When stevedores were needed the steamship companies would call the union and report the need for a crew. The business agent would pick out the gang foremen—union men all—and they would pick out the men for the gang, these also being union men. Only when the union lists were exhausted did these men get an opportunity to work.

In desperation, these "outsiders", excepting Garza, had been trying to organize their outsiders into a labor organization, one which might buck the mighty ILA, so powerful that the employers let it choose their employees. In retaliation, and despite the fact that these men were not members of the union, they were placed on trial before a board of officers of the union. The union denied them employment for a period of about thirty days.

Garza's story was a little different. He was called up before the union business agent and told he was "trying to break the local"—the ILA's greatest sin. He wasn't tried, "he simply wasn't hired", the NLRB trial examiner found.

He continued going to the hiring hall, asking again and again for work, the only reply he got being "we'll see what we can do about it." After a while he stopped coming to the hall.

The other four men appealed to the NLRB. Suddenly Clay and Williamson were offered settlements for the pay they lost while they were serving out the sentences of the union jury.

The trial examiner urged the Board to order the union to make good the pay Nemeth, Knowles and Garza lost. He also urged that the union should stop trying to make the employers discriminate against any man who wanted to work as a longshoreman and that the company associations should stop assisting the union by agreeing to illegal hiring procedures.

The News goes on to report that so far as the NLRB record shows, everything slipped back into the normal dark ways after a short time in the light.

Truth is indeed much stranger than fiction.

* * *

ARIZONA BUILDERS FOR RIGHT TO WORK—According to report in the Phoenix (Arizona) Republic, an organization of small independent contractors was formed on September 18, which plans to fight violations of the Arizona right-to-work and anti-picketing laws, as well as the Taft-Hartley law. Incorporation papers have been filed with the state corporation commission.

Mr. Douglas Dana, President, is quoted as saying that 52 members signed up at the first meeting and membership is aimed at 1,500 to 2,000 independent contractors and building supply houses and their employees in the territory known as the Valley of the Sun. Principal objective of the organization, Dana said, is to fight in every way possible, "all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court if necessary," to prevent violation of the labor laws. Dana said his firm had been picketed illegally for five weeks.

* * *

SALUTE TO SWIFT & COMPANY—Despite a 10-day strike of some 25,000 workers against them, Swift & Company steadfastly refused to sign a compulsory union membership clause demanded by the United Packing House Workers of America and the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, negotiating jointly.

The workers returned to their jobs following agreement for a wage increase and certain fringe benefits over a three year contract—<u>but no union shop.</u>

Four other of the major packing houses have signed union shop agreements.

It is indeed encouraging to find another of the major firms of the country with the courage to take a firm stand on the principle of individual freedom. Our thanks and best wishes to Swift & Company.