

Notes On A Swinging Pendulum

With the exception of the protest strike staged by the Lewis' retractor mine workers and an occasional childish demonstration such as the picketing of a wedding attended by Senator Taft, the preliminary reaction of union leaders to the Hart-Byrd Bill has been unenthusiastic. Both Philip Murray of the CIO and William Green of the AFL have rejected the idea of calling a general strike and have indicated that they will fight the bill in the courts and at the polls.

Already leading labor lawyers have adjudged important sections of the measure unconstitutional. They also argue that other provisions, while apparently constitutional, are so vague that they must be defined by court interpretation before they can be applied to a labor-management relations. There is little doubt that another lawyer's field day is in the making.

Louis Stark, the New York Times labor expert, has said that the exact parallel to industry's reaction to passage of the Wagner Act in 1935. The principal effect of "Labor's Magna Charta" was to take away from management the right to hire a worker for union activities. It has been almost instantly branded the measure "revolutionary" and grided for legal battle. A committee of Liberty League lawyers termed the entire Act unconstitutional and this, as Mr. Stark pointed out, was the wholehearted defiance of the law by employers until the Supreme Court, two years later, upheld the act. During that period the National Labor Relations Board had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to fight injunctions brought by employers on every possible occasion.

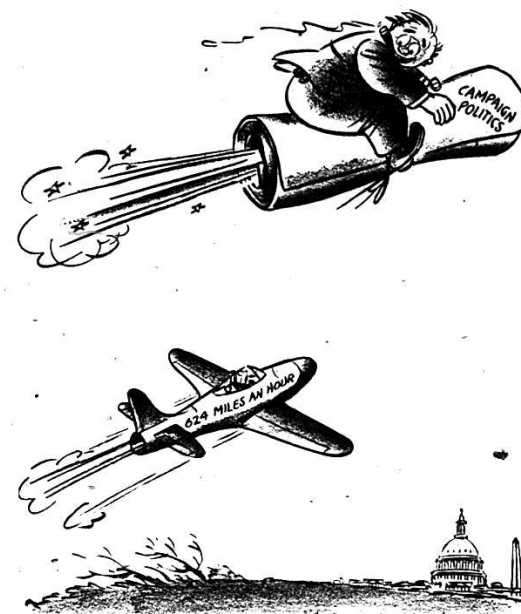
Management lost most of the court battles. The Wagner Act without the concerted action of the courts and the labor union triumphantly entered the period of their greatest growth. Management then turned from the courts to the polls and after a decade of hard-polling (interrupted, of course, by a war) but also materially assisted by union abuses) finally saw a sympathetic Congress enact the Taft-Hartley Bill over President Truman's veto. Whether the new

labor bill will turn out to be management's "Magna Charta" is, of course, doubtful. It does not restore the full union-busting privileges the Wagner Act took away, but it goes a long way toward doing so, and by curbing the union's powers and making further organization extremely difficult.

The unions leave no doubt that they will follow exactly the same pattern in their battle against the Taft-Hartley Bill. If they do not obtain redress in the courts, they will fight at the polls. Already both AFL and CIO are publicly committed to battle against the re-election of all those Congressmen who voted for the Taft-Hartley Bill. For better or for worse, this is certain to be the hottest single political issue in the 1947-48 campaign and the spectacle of the platform committees of both Parties wrestling with it at the forthcoming conventions will be edifying indeed.

In view of this background, statements like that of the National Association of Manufacturers calling for "wholesale co-optation" of the Taft-Hartley Act can only be described as wasteful. The unions will give the measure exactly the same degree of support—the NAM gave the Wagner Act, which, in view of the spirit in which it was passed, was "in fact" a measure which was reasonably to be expected.

This political sea-sawing may as the more sanguine observers believe, eventually produce a sound and workable Federal labor code. Certainly the Wagner Act needed revision, and the supporters of the Taft-Hartley Act, by writing into it a provision for future Congressional review, have conceded in advance that they have not arrived at a final answer. The coming political battle will be hard on the nerves and the Taft-Hartley Act will be passed under harder on the unorganized and non-managerial bystanders who, until, as usual, are caught in the middle of a great propaganda barrage. It may take whatever comfort there is in the realization that this is the way we customarily do business in a democracy, and so far it has worked out pretty well.



People's Platform

Battle Of Books

CHARLOTTE
HERE is a copy of a letter I have sent to Armed Services Board, which in war-time prepared millions of low-cost reprints of American books and distributed them to our fighting men around the world.

This is a plea to the officers and members of the Armed Services Editions organization to work out with me. Yes to a government, to the judges, and all its channels for distribution can be retained—for at least one year.

CHARLOTTE
I HAVE sent the following letter to President Truman, General Bradley, Senators Ross and Ullrich, and Representative Jones.

CHARLOTTE
I AM a barber of ten or more years of experience. I have practiced barbering in North Carolina since March 28, 1944 to the time of my discharge in 1946.

CHARLOTTE
I AM a citizen and veteran of World War II. I feel that I am being deprived of my rights to earn a living for my family.

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I AM 41 years old, married with a family. I have an honorable discharge No. 1348760 from the United States Army.

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Drew Pearson's Truman Refuses To Allow NLRB To Quit

WASHINGTON
THE White House kept it quiet, but Paul M. Herzog, chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, and his NLRB staff, have been advised to resign.

WASHINGTON
"Can you administer this act fairly and in the public interest, though you recommended a veto?" Truman asked his caller.

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Marquis Childs

Power Firm Strategy

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IT is an ancient axiom of strategy that if you can't gain your objective by frontal attack, then you should try a flanking maneuver.

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An Opportunity For Mr. Truman

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NEW YORK
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