UNION SECURITY


A group sympathetic to labor and opposing legal restraint on the closed shop faces the problem of union democracy. Recognizing the dangers of the abuse of power, they endorse, and urge unions to adopt, a set of democratic principles to assure that unions "shall be open to all qualified workers without discrimination and . . . that the democratic rights of members under union constitutions shall be protected."


Mr. Steinkraus sees some justification for the closed shop for "such unions as those in the building trades" but questions its applicability to other branches of industry and emphasizes the fact that real union security "depends on the kind of a job the union is performing." Mr. Stark appraises the union security issue critically, concluding that "unless thoroughly democratic practices respecting membership and self-government are fostered within unions, the spread of the union shop will evoke demands for government regulation" which may seriously interfere with "free collective bargaining. That may well be a heavy price to pay for the union shop."


A discussion of the impact of the closed shop on democracy written just previous to the formulation of the wartime maintenance of membership compromise. The author believes that acceptance of the closed shop will restrict individual freedom to such an extent that the result will be "a stratified nation, with classes reduced to fixed and relatively immutable categories." Maintaining that its advocacy by labor stems

Includes references dealing with the closed shop, union shop, preferential hiring, maintenance of membership, and the check-off.

Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
from management's intransigent attitude, his "precondition for a
liberal, humane solution" is that "management must never try again
to lay a rude—or even a subtle—hand on the conscience of a man
who is debating whether or not to join a union."

Collective bargaining negotiations and contracts. Bureau of National
This reference manual gives numerous examples of all types of cur-
rent union security contract clauses, with an explanatory introduction
to the section dealing with each type. In addition to clauses providing
for the closed, union, or maintenance of membership shop, also in-
cluded are clauses covering preferential hiring, maintenance of dues,
employer encouragement of union membership, preservation of the
"open union," penalty for loss of union membership and various
types of check-off.

Congressional Digest (726 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.),
February, 1947. "Controversy of the month—outlawing the closed
shop." pp. 35-64 (whole issue). 50 cents.
An unusually complete treatment of the present status of the closed
shop, including articles dealing with the meaning of the term, its his-
torical development, and both existing and proposed State and Fed-
eral measures designed to outlaw or control it. Each side of a pro
and con discussion is represented by eight statements by various
leaders and organizations.

Golden, Clinton S. and Harold J. Ruttenberg. The dynamics of indus-
trial democracy. New York 16. Harper and Brothers (49 East 33rd
St.). 1942. 358 pp. $3.00. Chapter VII, "The necessity of union
The authors maintain that the union shop is democratic in origin and
basis, and that it is a "practical necessity" for the achievement of
union-management cooperation. Organized labor's arguments in favor
of the union shop are developed in detail, and specific arguments op-
posing it are answered.

Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc. (RKO Building, New York 20),
Monograph No. 8. Maintenance of union membership; a study of
official cases and company experience. By Bryce M. Stewart and
Walter J. Couper. 1943. 83 pp. $1.25.
This study is based on an examination of union security cases acted
on by the National Defense Mediation Board and the War Labor
Board, and on the experience revealed by questionnaire returns from
59 companies that operated with maintenance of membership clauses.
The authors conclude that these clauses have not contributed sub-
stantially to better industrial relations and more responsible unions,
warn organized labor against establishing monopolies of employment,
and predict that the pressure for union security will abate when em-
ployers sincerely accept the right of employees to organize.

A compilation of 25 complete articles and numerous excerpts dealing with various aspects of the closed shop. Arguments representing both points of view are presented and are summarized in outline form especially convenient for debaters. A comprehensive bibliography is included.


This analysis evaluates arguments for and against the closed shop, and explores possibilities for a solution in the light of actual and proposed legislation. The author recommends a comprehensive legislative plan providing for regular union elections and accounting, regulation of membership requirements where closed shop contracts exist, and the right of appeal to labor relations boards by individual complainants. He considers "the proposal to outlaw all closed-shop contracts" as "out of line with actual needs and trends."


The sponsor of a Federal anti-closed-shop bill and the president of a Chicago manufacturing concern debate the closed shop issue. Holding it to be monopolistic and an invasion of individual freedom, Senator Ball maintains the closed shop restricts entrance to a trade and is contrary to rank and file and public desire. Mr. Buchbaum views it as an aid to morale, increased production and improved discipline, and as consistent with the democratic principle of majority rule.


Results of a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics showing that "out of a total reported union membership of about 75,000 in the 21 plants visited, only 395, or about one-half of one per cent, resigned from the union during the escape period." Union and management procedures and attitudes are also summarized.


Recognizing that "discussions of the closed-shop principle usually generate more heat than light," this study presents both points of view and summarizes the opinions of 192 company executives on the question. While the study indicates that some executives support the
closed shop, it points out "that management generally will not be at
all receptive to requests for the closed shop until the unions have
demonstrated . . . that they are qualified and willing to accept the
obligations as well as the advantages of such a status."

Quarterly Journal of Economics (M-12 Littauer Center, Cambridge,

This article examines the extent to which unions are "closed," often
considered to be one of the most serious aspects of the closed shop
issue. Analyzing the admission provisions in the constitutions of 185
international unions, and drawing on "all available studies relative to
admission policies," this paper presents an unusually complete treat-
ment of a little explored but much discussed problem.

Slichter, Sumner H. Union policies and industrial management. Wash-
ington 6, D.C. Brookings Institution (722 Jackson Place). 1941.

Professor Slichter describes the forms and extent of union restric-
tions on hiring, and discusses the effect of such restrictions both on
the labor supply and the quality of the workers. Although rejecting
the assumption that the closed shop necessarily results in "union
dominance," the author warns that "the interest of the unions them-
selves requires that the closed shop shall not be linked with closed
unions or that it shall not interfere with the employer's freedom to
hire men willing to join, because only on these conditions can the
community permit free trade unions."

Toner, Jerome L. The closed shop. Washington 8, D.C. American
$3.25.

Father Toner traces the history of the principle of the closed shop
from the English guild system to the present. Summarizing Amer-
ican experience, he explains that the closed shop prohibition on the
railroads resulted from unique conditions in that industry, and de-
votes separate chapters to the practices and attitudes of employers
and labor. While he favors the closed shop, the author concludes that
two important provisions are needed to permit its "proper function-
ing . . . : (1) Every union must be open generally to qualified workers
on reasonable and non-discriminatory terms; and (2) workers who
have been refused membership . . . suspended or expelled from a
union should be permitted to appeal . . . to an impartial chairman or
a labor board."

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul-
etin No. 865. Extent of collective bargaining and union recognition
1946. 8 pp. 5 cents.

The latest annual report of the number of workers covered by union
agreements, with breakdowns to show the number covered by closed
shop, union shop, maintenance of membership and check-off clauses.