

require answer. But an examination of the attitudes expressed by various officials, attorneys and others opposed to the organization of public employees indicates that there is at times a confusion between a right to associate and a right to obtain a binding contract. Association need be no more than a method by which a group expresses its opinion concerning some of its terms of employment. The common feeling of the country, as well as its national policy, has established clearly the right of employees to decide for themselves whether or not they will form an association to discuss their problems and to elect representatives of their own choosing, whether public employees or not, through whom to submit their requests.

Should outside affiliations of employee organization be forbidden?

In private industry it has been established by the National Labor Relations Act that the employees themselves shall decide what sort of union they desire and whether it shall be independent or affiliated. In public service this is to a lesser degree the case, for certain exceptions are recognized as essential. The different forms which organizations of public employees have

taken may be due in special circumstances in particular branches of the service to accidental mode of origin, or to tradition.

In this country no uniform policy exists. Practice varies both with regard to permitting individual membership in associations which operate predominantly in non-government employment and with respect to the affiliation of organizations of government employees with the labor movement in general. Concerning policemen, for example, several of the leading cities have taken a stand against outside unions organizing their employees by refusing to recognize such representatives, and have ruled against affiliation of a police association with the A.F.L., the C.I.O., or any other outside bargaining agency.

Public bodies are justified in the prohibition of outside affiliation by any group in the government service solely when the danger of partisanship or impaired public confidence is real. A general, indiscriminate attempt to dominate

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