

The American Way

By George Peck

REMOVE THAT APPENDIX

The shouting and the tumult have died—temporarily. As this is being written there are no major strikes in progress and none threatened for the very immediate future. The nation sits back with a sigh of relief, disaster having been narrowly averted, to indulge in wishful thinking to the effect that the worst is over and that labor-management strife is permanently ended.

The Congress, which was all hot and bothered and galvanized for action when the coal strike was on, a nation-wide rail strike threatened and a maritime strike hanging in the

offing, has sunk back into its former state of apathy and laissez-faire, as far as enacting remedial legislation is concerned.

The settlements of the General Motors, steel, rail and coal strikes, and the averting of the maritime strike, however, are but temporary adjustments—simply "shots in the arm" to keep the patient alive and breathing, but still uncured of his basic ailment.

The perilous situation through which the nation has just passed, can be likened to a man stricken with an appendicitis attack. He calls in his physician, who has him x-rayed. The x-ray shows a diseased appendix, the only real cure for which is to chop it out. The patient, temporarily relieved, heeds not the advice of his physician, does not have the diseased appendix removed, thus leaving himself subject to future distress and suffering, perhaps premature death.

What we have done has been simply to apply ice to the wound of our industrial patient. He is still a mighty sick man, kidding himself because for the moment he feels no pain, he is cured. He still has his diseased appendix, which in his case, is the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Until this sore spot in our industrial economy is removed, there can be no permanent labor-management peace.

This Act, acclaimed by union labor as its "Magna Charta," eventually will, if not repealed, be the Frankenstein monster to destroy union labor. Its discriminatory

provisions against the employer, sooner or later will destroy that employer. When the transpires, one of two things will happen to the worker. He will be out of a job, or he will be a slave working for the government, with his collective bargaining and strike rights just cherished memories of a former happier period.

The point the workers of this nation must realize is that what hurts the boss, sooner or later gets around to hurting them. One of the irresponsible labor leaders, more forthrightly acknowledged that the Wagner Act hurts the boss when he said: "Sure, we know the Wagner Act favors us over management. H---, that's why we're against changing it."

Permanent cure for industrial strife will not come from new labor laws. Such laws will only bring a flock of new bureaus and bureaucrats to administer them, more government controls, more public employees eating at the public

trough. Through our history we have repealed laws when the x-ray showed they were a disease upon the body politic. The x-ray shows the Wagner Act, passed by Congress with the high hope that it would prevent industrial strife, has actually increased industrial strife. The Wagner Act has aggravated the wound, and the common sense thing to do now, is to repeal it.

Anything short of this will simply be applying ice to the wound, be but a temporary palliative. For the future welfare of our industrial economy, our labor laws need an appendectomy. The appendix—the Wagner Labor Relations Act—must be removed.

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