

DANGER OF CLOSED SHOP

If the closed shop is to be recognized as a national principle we might as well bid good-bye to any ideas of future democracy of industry. Compulsory membership in trades unions cannot be a good thing either for the union itself or for the employer, and least of all for the man who is compelled to join an organization of which he disapproves or whose membership he does not wish to accept. Whenever the closed shop has been accepted as a fixed principle it has always proved a stepping stone to compulsory organization in fields where no such organization has been found necessary or desirable. The existence of the closed shop principle is a direct mandate to the establishment of labor organizations, even where they are not wanted. This is clearly seen in such labor groups as those of teaching and public service, where there is no call for organization and where the application of the closed shop idea is not only injurious but distasteful to many of those concerned. The honest advocate of trades unionism and of the rights of labor cannot logically claim the right to tyrannize over non-union men and drive them into an organization with which they do not sympathize. Those who are advocating the principle of freedom of contract at Washington should be granted support on the part of all members of the community who believe in liberty of action and democratic independence of the individual.

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