

Does your generation of experience working with organized labor and the structure of the union shop give you any insight as to what we can expect from the agricultural sector if we intervene and make the union shop possible?

Mr. REUTHER. I believe that the union shop which, incidentally was built into the Schenley agreement and the DiGiorgio agreement, would be a constructive force and would contribute much toward stability.

I would insist, No. 1, that the workers democratically determine this, and if this is their will, then I believe that the union shop would be a constructive step, because so long as the union is insecure, if the union feels that its very existence is constantly being challenged or threatened in the employer-employee relationship, an insecure union can never be a responsible union.

It takes a strong, stable union to develop a sense of responsibility and to carry out its contractual commitments, and I think, therefore, trying to find the structure on which you could get the strongest union, I always qualify that, it must be a democratic union.

I don't want a strong union built on an autocratic control of a few people at the top, but a democratic union is a union that I think will give greater stability because it will be strong enough to meet its obligations under the contract.

Mr. SCHEUER. Would you say that this surmise of yours has been borne out in the 31 States that permit the union shop as against the 19 States where the union shop is prohibited?

Mr. REUTHER. I think the proof of the pudding is that the General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co., United States Steel Corp., all these corporations that started out with a built-in bias against the union shop concept, all came to the conclusion that the union shop is necessary to build a responsible, stable, collective-bargaining relationship.

I believe there is no question about it, if they could have their way they would be in favor of extending that principle to every State and eliminate the State obstacles that stand in the way in those States where we have the so-called right-to-work law.

Mr. SCHEUER. And you would say that the absence of the right to work law has not interfered with production, or union unrest?

Mr. REUTHER. Not necessarily. The union shop has been a stabilizing force.

I might say this: If we are suddenly confronted in the General Motors Corp. with a decision, if we were faced with it, that we, the UAW, were going to pass out of existence, that would be the most serious crisis the General Motors management would have to face in its history, because in the absence of a strong union, you would have total chaos.

Mr. O'HARA. Mr. Scheuer, if you would permit me, I would say I recall well your fine speech at the time 14-B was being considered by the last Congress, in which you pointed out a business magazine survey which indicated that those employers who had the union shop the longest liked it the most. I think that point is certainly valid here.

Mr. SCHEUER. I always forget my accumulation of knowledge from Congress to Congress. [Laughter.] And I do not want to have anyone think that with preknowledge of the witness' point of view I was leading him.

Mr. O'HARA. I just want to make a few points.