

Hang the Law

THE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION of the National Labor Relations Board has brought to light some rather ribald practices of this government agency. Headline and editorial writers found much to decry in the methods employed by this bureaucracy in its attempt to do the impossible—raise wages by the collective bargaining technique.

But critics of the law which gave birth to the NLRB seek only to amend it to their own ends and none of them seems to discern its innate stupidity. The Wagner Act, for the enforcement of which the commissariat was established, assumes that business men can pay higher wages if they want to. They must be made to want to.

The power of organized labor rests upon the blunt instrument of persuasion backed up by governmental sanction. Thus the time-dishonored technique of all pressure groups has been made available to labor unions. They have won a privilege law for their own benefit at the expense of everybody else and it is implemented by quasi-judicial authority policing industrial relations.

But they, in turn, are victims of just such privilege laws wangled by similar pressure groups operating ever since the country felt its first growing pains.

When large tracts of land were granted to the railroads, the squatters, farmers and prospectors who had pioneered in these areas were ruthlessly evicted, sometimes killed, and their homes were destroyed. The process was strictly legal because the railroads had gained from the government a privilege which the courts had notoriously extended through confirmation.

From the distant days of "the full dinner pail" to the present, protectionists have been getting from Washington by back-scratching and log-rolling the tariff enactments which confer on them the privilege of robbing the American worker of part of his wages to the tune of billions while petty smugglers are clapped in jail.

A subsidy to cotton land owners for holding land out of use results in the eviction of share croppers; their misery is part payment on the privilege.

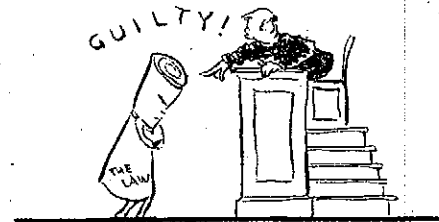
Milk distributors, in cahoots with labor organizations, obtain regulatory measures which enable them to boost their prices at the expense of babies.

The American Legion, associations of manufacturers or retailers, farmers' groups, even religious

bodies, maintain lobbies for the purpose of bribing, cajoling or intimidating legislators into granting special privileges—at the expense of unprivileged citizens.

So, if the NLRB used unethical methods to enforce an unethical law, it had many precedents to go by. This board was told, by the law, to see that workers in factories, stores, warehouses and beauty shops were organized so that they could "bargain collectively" with their bosses for higher wages.

If the Board went a little beyond the letter of the law it should be complimented for carrying out its spirit. If the Board acted with partiality, it must be remembered that the law itself is not impartial, for it is based on the false assumption that wages come out of the pockets of employers, and that force will make them disgorge; force is never impartial.



The NLRB is not on trial. The law itself is the accused. It is a liar, a thief and a trouble-maker. It assumes that wages are paid by capital, and that is a lie. It is a thief in that it robs workers of their jobs by trying to establish arbitrary wage scales above the natural level of wages, which is determined by the margin of production. It is a trouble-maker because it encourages disputes between worker and employer, both of whom are engaged in the production of wealth. The law, not its commissars, should be hung.

This is Socialism

A TRADE PAPER ANNOUNCES: "Bids for furnishing 7,500,000 yards of mattress ticking to the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, to be used in the manufacture of mattresses for distribution to low-income families through state relief agencies, were opened today."