

WSM

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The House of Representatives ^{has} spent an entire week in hot controversy over labor legislation. Labor legislation is always highly controversial but in this instance has been made more controversial than usual by purely political considerations. The purely political considerations grew out of the national campaign last year in which President Truman made the Taft Hartley Labor Relations ~~legislation~~ Act ^a the prime issue in the presidential campaign. Repeal of the Taft Hartley Act and the reenactment of the Wagner Act became a political slogan. Slogans, however, like newspaper headlines frequently fail to be accurate labels. For instance, neither President Truman nor labor leaders ^{now} are supporting simple repeal of the Taft Hartley Act and reenactment of the Wagner Act. [↑] On the other hand, neither the Republican Congressional leadership nor the employee group representatives are supporting retention of the Taft Hartley Act just as it is. ~~For instance,~~ ^A an amendment was offered last Friday to repeal the Taft Hartley law outright and substitute unamended the original Wagner Act. Although this has been a political slogan and the embodiment of a political issue, how many votes do you suppose this amendment got? There were only 37 votes for it and 275 against it

and who do you suppose led the fight against this simple repeal of the Taft Hartley Act and reenactment of the Wagner Act - the Democratic administration leadership in the House of Representatives. *On the* Now let us

on the other hand, look at the other side. Who is it that you would guess is supporting

the Wood Bill which would repeal the Taft Hartley Act and substitute

therefore. ~~True many of its features are contained in the Taft-Hartley~~
an act with much modification and amelioration, It is the Republican leadership in

coalition with about half of the Southern Democrats. So what do we

have? We have both the Republican leadership and the Democratic

leadership proposing repeal of the Taft ~~Act~~ Hartley Act. ~~and~~ *The*

questions of contention are to what decree will the Act be modified.

We fought all of the week and no decision was reached. We begin

again next Tuesday. Now let me report the situation as I see it. *In my*

opinion, neither the Lesinski Bill which is ~~an~~ *the* administration bill nor

the Wood Bill, which is the bill of the Republican and Southern

Democratic coalition, has enough votes to pass today. I believe the

of congress, and this includes me, majority think the Lesinski Bill goes too far in labor's direction

and that the ^{the} Woods Bill goes too far in employer's direction.

Before the administration's bill can be adopted I think it will be

necessary for at least four amendments to be added to it. I will

briefly name these amendments.

1. Mutual responsibility of employer and employee contracts.

2. The right of the employer of free speech in the matter of

employer-employee relationships.

3. The requirement that both employer and employee representatives in labor bargaining agreements make an anti-communist affidavit.

4. The right of the President as a final resort to seek action of the Courts to protect the Nation against strikes threatening the National health and safety.

If these amendments are adopted to the Administration's bill I think it can muster enough votes to pass. Thus far, these amendments have been rejected by the Labor Committee but, legislation being the process of compromise that it is, they ~~will~~^{will} perhaps be accepted. It is my opinion that unless they are ~~in~~, the Administration's bill will not be passed.

Now let us look at the Wood Bill. Before it can muster sufficient votes to pass, amendments must be added to it, too-- amendments ~~which seek~~ to soften or tone down its harsh provisions on labor. The first Wood Bill introduced has already been withdrawn and a fairer bill presented. But the supporters of the Wood Bill are now in the process of offering and supporting amendments to tone it down still further. So you see what we have here. There are two bills, each of which a majority think goes too far--but in opposite directions. The area of disagreement is wide but as amendments are offered and accepted to both bills they are brought into closer agreement. Just which texts will

finally be adopted by the House I am not willing to predict this morning.

The whole development, however, is ^{distinctly} ~~somewhat~~ encouraging in this way —

After a full week of controversy I think it is safe now to predict

that the Nation will finally be getting a much better piece of labor

legislation than seemed possible two weeks ago. This is true because

the Administration leaders know now that they will have to accept

strengthening amendments to their bill to pass it and the anti-

administration forces know, too, that they will have to accept

amendments softening their bill before it can pass. Over-all the

prospects are that the bill which finally passes, whether it is the

Administration Bill or the Wood Bill, will be somewhere between the

two extremes. In other words, I ^{now} believe ~~and as for my own~~

~~position, I hope~~ ^{that} we will pass a sounder and fairer bill than either of

the two original proposals upon which we began fighting. If this is

the end-product then that is just one more vindication of the Democratic

process - the means by which controversy ^{ed be} ~~will~~/resolved by majority

action, the means by which the American public work their will into

final national policy.