RTWers New Ploy—Political 'Reform'

(Continued from Page 1)

court tests—has taken in and shelled out a boodle. In the 1969-1972 period, these guys hauled in $5,015,380.

NRTWC and its legal arm, between them, had a four-year income of $8,816,024, an average of about $2.2 million a year.

All of the foregoing is to introduce NRTWC's latest ploy, which demonstrates its highly developed sense of survivability and opportunism at its best.

Floundering in its efforts to put RTW over in new states, and flopping in the courts, the right to work committee has grasped at a new straw, political reform, and it's treating unions as the same hob-goblins in the political area as in others.

Recently, the committee commissioned a nationwide poll on a combination of the capaign reform and RTW issues. The poll reportedly cost $6,500. It was conducted by Opinion Research, which does a lot of polling for conservative groups. The results of the poll were flashed to the audience the committee most wants to reach—the Congress—by way of a full page ad in the *Washington Post* (Page 3), which cost $5,043.

Predictably, the poll shows what NRTWC would most want it to show. But, as in so many polls, the manner of questioning leaves the results wide open to suspicion because the questions oversimplify complicated issues that can't be explained briefly.

For example, 58 percent of those polled responded they had heard of so-called state "right to work" laws, not a very good response when you consider the committee promoting the proposals has been in business nearly 20 years. The next question in sequence on the poll was "Are you in favor of right to work laws?" Yes, said 71 percent, 13 percent higher than had even heard of the laws.

The poll itself, as printed, includes no explanation of RTW laws. If you assume an explanation by the interviewer, you have to assume one that over-simplified the issue and put RTW in its best possible light to explain a 13 percent bulge in those who approve it over those who actually have heard of it.

Respondents were asked "If you were asked to vote for such a law (RTW), would you vote for or against it?" Sixty-nine percent said they'd vote for it.

Yet, in all but a handful of states where the issue has been voted on, it has been defeated by large margins. In two major industrial states, for example—Ohio and California—the issue was turned down by voters 2-1 and 3-2 respectively. And this came after long campaigns in which the public got a chance to understand what the issue stood for.

In the area of unions in politics, the poll is similarly suspect. It first sets up a straw-man with this question: "Do you think there is or is not too much power concentrated in the hands of labor leaders of big unions?" Seventy percent say "yes."

Then, the poll throws in its big number: "Do you think union officials should be permitted to use dues money to campaign for political candidates, or should this be forbidden?" Seventy-nine percent said ban it.

On the basis of this response NRTWC conjured up its $5,043 full-page ad in the *Washington Post* under the heading "Do you want a Veto-Proof Congress? Think About It," and in the ad the attack is made on so-called "in-kind" activities of unions in politics.

It is hardly likely that the pollsters explained clearly or in any depth that (1) "in-kind" services that are part of labor's political programs involve work by union staff personnel among their own members, not the public at-large or (2) that this is perfectly legal under present law, or (3) that it contributes substantially to participation in the democratic process, which is supposed to be what our political system is all about.

Actually, the investment of $6,500 in a poll and $5,043 in a newspaper ad is a shrewd one for NRTWC. It buttresses the congressional conservatives who are NRTWC's allies in other things and helps them zero in on labor's political programs as the chief reason for their own version of campaign reform. It helps divert attention, as well, from the real reasons for campaign reform, those developed out of the Watergate affair.

Finally, and most practically, it will stimulate contribution glands of NRTWC's financial backers and help keep that old cash flow coming in, thus keeping in business what has essentially been a resounding failure.

A Court Setback

In the most recent reverse for the open-shoppers, 10 unions won a key ruling from a federal judge in a suit against the Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, the legal arm of the National Right to Work Committee.

The suit charges the open-shop group with using employer funds to finance litigation by workers against their unions in violation of a provision of the Landrum-Griffin Act that bars any "interested employer or employer association" from financing a court action by a union member.

The tax-exempt foundation has raised substantial funds to harass unions with suits brought in the names of workers, and the unions charge that a large part of the funds come from employers.

In the legal skirmishing that has taken place before the actual trial of the case, the "right-to-work" organization contended that the ban on employer financing applied only to suits brought to enforce the so-called "bill of rights" provisions of the Landrum-Griffin Act.

U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey of Washington, D.C. rejected this interpretation as clearly contrary to the intent of Congress.

DO YOU WANT A "VETO-PROOF" CONGRESS?

Think about it...

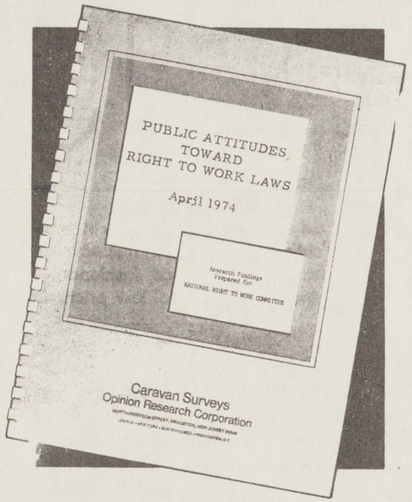
If the American people permit George Meany to achieve his "veto-proof" Congress, voters will have bought a pig in a poke, a new nationwide survey reveals.

A "veto-proof" Congress (one having a two-thirds majority controlled by Big Labor) would enact many new special interest laws adding further to the already enormous power of union officials.

"Veto-Proof" Legislation

The "veto-proof" Congress sought by George Meany and his cohorts would extend compulsory unionism to the majority of workers in all 50 states, thus allowing union officials to spend even more of their members' dues for political campaigns.

Such action would run directly counter to the wishes of most Americans, according to the latest Opinion Research Corporation Caravan Survey. The new survey shows that some 70% or more of the American voting-age public—that's 95 million people—favor voluntary unionism, favor curbs on union political spending, and think union officials already have too much power.



THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND BIG LABOR

. . . By a margin of nearly four-to-one (70% vs. 19%), Americans think there is "too much power concentrated in the hands of labor leaders of the big unions in this country." This opinion is held by 76% of high school graduates, 69% of mid-income Americans, 60% of union members and 75% of the "thought leaders" in the country.

. . . By a margin of more than six-to-one (79% vs. 12%), Americans feel union officials should not be permitted to use compulsory union dues and fees "to campaign for political candidates." This opinion is held by 78% of all union members, 83% of those who live in the Northeast, 75% of the nation's Democrats and 85% of the Republicans.

. . . By a margin of more than two-to-one (68% vs. 27%), American voters feel every citizen should be able to "hold a job whether or not he belongs to a union."

. . . By a margin of more than six-to-one (74% vs. 11%), American voters feel that Congress should not repeal Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act, which gives states the authority to ban compulsory unionism. This opinion is held by 78% of those 18-29 years of age, 78% of high school graduates, and 69% of union members.

The margins in favor of voluntarism in this 1974 ORC survey are larger than ever but the results are consistent with previous findings and supported by every state and national study of Right to Work opinion ever conducted by any reputable opinion research organization.

WHY THIS "PUBLIC BE DAMNED" ATTITUDE?

Given these figures, why hasn't Congress enacted laws to curb the abuses of Big Labor?

It's no mystery.

The answer is money.

Top union officials have at their command tens of thousands of salaried staff people across the country, and an income totaling several billion dollars a year—most of which is taken out of the pockets of wage-earners as a condition of their employment. This tax-free kitty and billion-dollar-a-year staff network is being used to promote the hand-picked political favorites of the union hierarchy—candidates who will carry out the union bosses' mandate at the expense of the public.

"CAMPAIGN REFORM" THAT ISN'T

For example, take a close look at the so-called "campaign reform" bill strongly backed by AFL-CIO officials, and recently passed by the Senate. The legislation curbs the political activities of every special interest group in the country except the Big Labor unions, whose politicking consists largely of unreported "in kind" expenditures through staff assignments.

Instead of a "veto-proof" Congress, the American people need lawmakers who will respect the public's interests. The American people need a Congress which will find the time—despite pressure from Big Labor—to consider a National Right to Work law banning forced union membership. The American people need and want a Congress that will check rather than enlarge the excessive powers and privileges of top union officials.

You can help end the abuses of union monopoly power by joining the National Right to Work Committee, a nationwide coalition of more than 40,000 concerned citizens from all walks of life who believe union membership should be voluntary, not compulsory. For your free copy of the Opinion Research Corporation survey, and information on how you can help, write: Survey Results, National Right to Work Committee, 1990 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

THE NATIONAL RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEE

1990 M Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036

NRTWC Paid $5,043 for this ad in the Washington Post