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Union Choice Freedom May Fall If Carter Carries Through Vow

A MERICAN working people may lose their right of choice on whether or not to join labor unions, if President-elect Jimmy Carter carries out his campaign promises.

The Democratic platform says: "We will seek repeal of Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act, which allows states to legislate the antiunion open shop."

Prior to his nomination, campaign literature for Mr. Carter declared he "would approve legislation to repeal Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act."

The issue is simple. Federal laws dictated by labor unions provide that where a union is the bargaining agent, it can compel other workers to join the union or be fired.

Section 14(b) provides that states may vote "right to work" laws which would prevent firing of workers for not joining unions. Oklahoma does not yet have such a law, but 20 states do.

In the Nov. 2 election, the issue of compulsory unionism was on the ballot in only one state, Arkansas. It was put there by labor unions trying to abolish that state's right to work law. The referendum failed by about 2 to 1.

Arkansas has had the benefits of freedom to work since 1944, attracting many industries and adding thousands of jobs. In spite of a heavily financed campaign and vigorous drive by union forces, Arkansas citizens voted from their experience against compulsory unionism. They do not want it.

Two years ago, a scientific survey made by Opinion Research Corp., Princeton, N.J., showed that 68 per

cent of the American public favored a man being able to hold a job whether or not he belongs to a union. Even 43 per cent of union members surveyed agreed with this policy!

With this preponderance of public opinion against compulsory unionism, why does President-elect Carter favor it? In a column by Associate Editor John Crown, The Atlanta Journal had this to say Aug. 6, 1976:

"Southerners believe in an individual's right to work without having to pay tribute to some union hack. As governor of Georgia, Mr. Carter subscribed to the right to work concept.

"But as a presidential candidate, Mr. Carter was taken to the top of the mountain by union official George Meany. And there spread out before Mr. Carter were all the riches of the union treasuries. Overcome by ambition and a thirst for power, Mr. Carter knelt down before George Meany. And Mr. Carter was transformed. He now advocates abolition of right to work protection and the enactment of common site picketing."

After the election, Business Week magazine predicted:

"Labor, which can rightly claim that its lavish expenditures of manpower and money on Carter's behalf provided his margin of victory, will present its bill to the White House early in the new Administration."

Besides compulsory unionism and common situs picketing, some sources anticipate the itemized statement also may include a demand for \$3 an hour minimum wage, with future raises tied to an "index factor." If labor collects, the public must pay.