

# **The Right to Work Principle**

## **(QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS)**

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### **1. WHAT IS THE RIGHT TO WORK PRINCIPLE?**

The Right to Work principle -- the guiding concept of the Institute -- affirms the right of every free American to work for a living without being compelled to belong to a union. Compulsory unionism in any form -- "union," "closed," or "agency" shop -- is a contradiction of the Right to Work principle and the fundamental human right which that principle represents. Every individual must have the right, but must not be compelled, to join a labor union.

### **2. WHAT IS A RIGHT TO WORK LAW?**

A Right to Work law guarantees that no person can be compelled, as a condition of employment, to join or not to join to pay dues to a labor union.

### **3. WHAT IS 14(B)?**

Section 14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act preserves the right of states to enact and enforce Right to Work laws, which prohibit compulsory unionism as a condition of employment. The National Labor Relations Act authorizes unionism, but Section 14(b) of Taft-Hartley allows states to protect their citizens from this abusive federal policy.

### **4. IS RIGHT TO WORK "ANTI-UNION?"**

The Right to Work is neither "anti-union" nor "pro-union." It is a matter of individual freedom. The Right to Work principle affirms the right of all Americans to work where they want and for whom they want without coercion of any kind to join or not to join labor unions, or to support them in any way. Unions, after all, are private organizations. No other private organization in America insists on having the power to extract financial support from unwilling people.

### **5. WHAT IS "EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION?"**

"Exclusive representation" gives union officials the power to represent all employees in a company's "bargaining unit" -- including employees who oppose Big Labor and don't want its "services." This monopoly bargaining power is a special privilege granted to union officials by federal law.

### **6. WHAT DO UNION PROPAGANDISTS MEAN BY THE TERM "FREE RIDER?"**

"Free Rider" is the name given by advocates of forced unionism to any employee who does not pay the union for "services" he does not want but which he is forced to accept because of "exclusive representation." Such an employee is actually a "captive passenger," or a victim of union officials' "forced rider" schemes.

### **7. WHAT EFFECT DOES A RIGHT TO WORK LAW HAVE ON A STATE'S STANDARD OF LIVING?**

Statistics show that Right to Work states enjoy greater economic vitality than do states where union membership is compulsory. Per capita income is growing at a faster rate in Right to Work states. Right to Work states also experience faster growth in manufacturing and nonagricultural jobs, greater capital expenditures, lower unemployment rates, and fewer work stoppages. Families in Right to Work states also have higher incomes than families in non-Right to Work states, once those incomes are adjusted for the higher taxes and inflation in non-Right to Work states.

