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James W. Silver to Mr. Emmerich, 4 December 1958

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the weakest union possible. I have seen enough of their literature to know that this is true. So I'm not impressed when their representatives appear before legislative committees and begin to wail about the rights of the poor laboring man.

For years I have been in favor of bringing industry to Mississippi even if it is at the expense of underpaid labor. For, I know that history teaches us that in the long run the laboring man will take care of himself. And I suppose he is a good deal better off as an exploited laborer than as a marginal farmer. But these people who believe that we can bring industry to Mississippi and keep out organized labor just aren't very bright - in the long run, anyway.

I'm not writing this for publication -- partly because the letter is very poorly expressed on account of the rush I'm in. But I did want you to know that there is at least one Mississippian still within the state who sees this question of the misnamed "right-to-work" differently than you do -- although I am of course in complete agreement with the last paragraph in your editorial.

Sincerely,

James W. Silver

December 4, 1958

Mr. Oliver Emmerich
The State-Times
Jackson, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Emmerich:

I am very much interested in your lead editorial of yesterday. And I think that I am just as much concerned as anyone in the Mississippi Manufacturers' Association with the potential loss of liberty when a laborer is "forced" to join a union. But in your editorial you did not make it clear that the Union shop is possible only after the majority of workers in a given plant have signified their membership. When the NLRB certifies, as the result of a democratic election, that a certain union may bargain collectively for all the workers, then and only then does the Union shop come to the bargaining table as a possibility, to be agreed upon by management and labor.

As you well know, this is an organized world we live in and the organized are the only ones who can protect themselves. The unorganized are lost. In our quarter of a century experience with farm controls, it has been established that once a majority of farmers have voted for acreage controls and subsidies, every farmer has to go along. He is compelled, with considerable penalties if he doesn't go along. This is the disciplined way to act in our organized world and most people are benefited even though there is probably some liberty lost in the process. So it is with the majority of workers bringing in the Union shop.

You are concerned with the Bill of Rights and so am I. But you know, too, that a literal interpretation of the word "liberty" in our complicated industrial society may lead to disaster for the person the Bill of Rights is supposed to protect. For example, some of the early legislation limiting the hours of labor for women in industry was thrown out on the basis that it infringed upon the "liberty" of the woman to contract for as many hours a day as she wished. The fallacy in all this, of course, was the idea that the woman was a really free agent.

Obviously, there are racketeers in organized labor. Some of them have gone to jail and others ought to be there. Perhaps we do need more state and federal legislation to take care of the thugs. But this is no reason to penalize labor by making it enormously difficult to organize at all. The doctors and lawyers and trade association people are pretty well organized into groups whose members must follow the directives of the organized group. The AMA, for instance, sends a bill to a doctor friend of mine, a bill for \$50 to help combat nationalized medicine. Whether the MD wants to pay this is beside the point; he isn't asked and he does pay it.

When you say that you are concerned with the rights of the laborer, I believe you. But when a good many members of the MMA talk about the rights of their workers, I'm tempted to believe that what they really want is no union or