

# Michigan Law Review

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Volume 49 | Issue 1

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1950

## Lieberman: UNIONS BEFORE THE BAR

Michigan Law Review

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### Recommended Citation

Michigan Law Review, *Lieberman: UNIONS BEFORE THE BAR*, 49 MICH. L. REV. 155 ().

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UNIONS BEFORE THE BAR. By *Elias Lieberman*. New York: Harpers. 1950. Pp. x, 371. \$5.

In this recent addition to the mounting tide of literature on labor and the law, a seasoned advocate of union causes surveys in retrospect the development of American unionism as measured by its treatment in the courts. Author Lieberman takes an "inventory" by reviewing in chronological sequence the landmark cases of labor's legal history. From the earliest reported case, the prosecution of the Philadelphia cordwainers in 1805 for criminal conspiracy, to the more recent decisions the author traces an evolution in the judicial attitude toward labor, its methods and its objectives. The first stage in this evolution is characterized as "open suppression." With *Commonwealth (Mass.) v. Hunt*, in 1842, came a period of "reluctant tolerance" by the courts of labor's existence. Following the enactment of the Sherman Antitrust Law in 1890 came the *Danbury Hatters* and *Duplex Printing Press* cases, considered as marking a period of "judicial prejudice." The case of *NLRB v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation*, which in 1937 held the Wagner Act constitutional, is hailed as ushering in an era of "social recognition" of unions. Finally, the decisions which have followed the Taft-Hartley Act are taken as evincing a policy aimed at making labor "socially responsible" in

accordance with its new powers. Since Author Lieberman has written this book primarily for the lay reader, his lack of a more penetrating and critical legal analysis of the cases is perhaps justified. However, his organization of the materials along strictly chronological lines rather than by subject-headings may be open to criticism because of an apparent lack of transition throughout. Each of twenty-four different chapters deals with a separate case which has no particular relation to the one preceding except that its date of decision is later in time. Lawyers who are not specialists in the labor field will find this book an interesting and readable account of the leading cases.