

# *The Battle of the Overpass and its Lasting Impact on Labor History*

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**Day 2:** Students will look at union busting techniques used in the Ford plants. The lesson ends with looking at an article from the Onion Newspaper, a satirical news source and a new touch on union busting.

## **Essential Question:**

1. Why is there conflict between the corporations and the everyday workers? How does that conflict get resolved?
2. What is the purpose of a union? What are different arguments for and against unionization?

## **Assessment:**

1. Discussion regarding the article from The Onion will provide students with an opportunity to prove learning occurred.
2. Students will be able to successfully complete a Venn Diagram

## **Setting the Purpose:**

Today students will be examining a series of documents demonstrating the difficulty of workers and therefore the absolute necessity of the Wagner Act.

- Journal: Why are there strength in numbers? Also, are there always strength in numbers?
- Read documents about the Ford Brotherhood of America and their recruiting techniques. Students will conduct a primary document analysis with these pictures that will be printed out and accompanied with typed text so that they know what the picture says in case the print is inadequate.
- Introduce Discharge.1 and discuss why the worker was fired.
- Discuss who Ford's leader was in regards to union busting and read documents Ford.1-3 and gang1-2. Provide students with time to draw the scene depicted in gang1-2 about the vigilante group operating in the Ford plant.
- With remaining time, distribute the article from the satirical newspaper 'The Onion', read as a class and discuss the points the article is making in regards to union busting. Students will then fill out a Venn diagram comparing the Onion article and how the workers' potential union is busted in comparison with the tools Ford used to bust up unions.

### **Analysis of Local Primary Sources:**

- The Ford Brotherhood of America – Motion to Intervene
- Evidence from trial on reasons for discharge from the Ford Motor Co.
- Trial testimony on union busting strategies
- Documents from Ford requesting ‘special police officers’ to be named and supervised by Ford with the same powers as a normal police officer.

### **Ties to National Primacy Sources or Sources:**

- None for this day although the Wagner Act will continue to receive mention throughout the week.

### **Annotated List of Materials and Resources:**

- Discharge.1 – NARA Document (Evidence submitted in court case demonstrating a worker was fired for joining the union).
- The Onion Article
- Questions and points to consider for Onion article
- Venn Diagram
- Ford.1-3 – NARA Document
- Gang.1-2 – NARA Document