

## TRADE UNION DEMOCRACY

The Upholsterers' International Union (A. F. L.) is marking out a path for trade unions that should long ago have been explored. It is creating an independent "court" to pass on appeals from union disciplinary orders. Any member sought to be punished by the union will have a right to put his case before an impartial nine-man board of jurists, educators and former public officials.

A tendency toward one-sidedness of "justice" in trade union discipline has long been apparent. In most cases the individual is punished by a local union. He may appeal to its executive board, and then to the international union's top board and then to the union convention, which may be held annually, biennially or even every three or four years. Meanwhile, the cards are, in a sense, stacked against the appellant. The union hierarchy can dip into the union's treasury to hire lawyers and work up its case, while the member accused or found guilty has only his own financial resources.

The Upholsterers' Union recognizes that unions cannot act as judge, jury and prosecutor in trying members. Despite the usual criticism of using "outsiders" in union affairs, the union has come forward courageously with a plan that should work. It is an official check against arbitrary abuse and in the democratic tradition. With Prof. Archibald Cox of Harvard University Law School as its first chairman, the plan is off to a good start.