

# IMPORTANT DATES IN UNITED STATES LABOR HISTORY

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- July 2, 1890 - Congress enacts the Sherman Antitrust Act. Although intended to outlaw monopolistic business practices, the courts use the Sherman Antitrust Act to drastically curtail the power of organized labor.
- June 1, 1898 - Congress enacts the Erdman Act, which prohibits the yellow-dog contract (an agreement not to join a union as a condition of employment).
- January 27, 1908 - *Adair v. United States*, 208 U.S. 161 (1908). By a vote of 7 to 2, the Supreme Court rules that the section of the Erdman Act prohibiting the yellow-dog contract was unconstitutional.
- February 3, 1908 - *Loewe v. Lawlor*, 208 U.S. 274 (1908). By a vote of 9 to 0, the Supreme Court decides that individual members of a labor union can be held liable for treble damages under the provisions of the Sherman Antitrust Act.
- October 15, 1914 - Congress enacts the Clayton Antitrust Act, which affirms "That the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce."
- April 9, 1923 - *Adkins v. Children's Hospital*, 261 U.S. 525 (1923). By a vote of 5 to 3, the Supreme Court rules that a 1918 federal law establishing a minimum wage for women in the District of Columbia was unconstitutional.
- July 5, 1935 - Congress enacts the National Labor Relations Act which affirms the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively and makes it an unfair labor practice for an employer to refuse to bargain collectively with the representatives of employees.
- April 12, 1937 - *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.*, 301 U.S. 1 (1937). By a vote of 5 to 4, the Supreme Court sustains the constitutionality of the National Labor Relations Act.

Sources: Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years - A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933* (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston), 1960; *The Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court* (Oxford University Press, New York), 1992; *United States Statutes at Large, Volumes 26, 30, 38, 49* (Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.).