

## *Our Will To Work Is America's Greatest Asset*

The industriousness of a people and the will to do good work is the greatest economic asset any nation can have.

It is a simple fact that nothing can be distributed until it has been produced. A family receiving \$5,000 a year in relief money instead of earning \$5,000 a year subtracts \$10,000 from the income value of the working population. If you multiply this by one million families, you subtract \$10 billion.

Jobs in America are going begging right now. The volume of lineage for help-wanted advertising in August 1968 was about twice as much as the 1957-59 average.

Every employer has experienced the situation where an employee or a potential employee has deliberately chosen to refuse employment.

Employees make "arrangements" to be laid off so they can draw unemployment relief. One hotel told a reporter that, "dishwashers are so hard to find, we might wind up using paper plates." Apprentice jobs go begging because low starting wages are not attractive to those on unemployment relief in spite of the fact that, after training, the income would be much higher.

It would be easy to furnish tens of thousands of pages of examples of the fact that an enormous number of Americans are voluntarily idle. They have come to believe that the working population owes them a living. They feel no shame in accepting money taken from the pay checks of others.

Another problem related to this one is the unwillingness of millions of employed persons to accept responsibility and do a conscientious job. This is particularly true of many in direct contact with customers, such as salesmen and service men. Their work is frequently careless and indifferent. In some cases, their attitude is downright surly. This is so widespread that the U. S. Chamber of Commerce

is urging business to "examine carefully the underlying cause of a rising tide of customer complaints."

The causes are easy to find. The solution is discouragingly difficult. How do you motivate people to do good work?

The two traditional methods are reward and punishment. Unfortunately, the tax collector takes more and more of the rewards; and unemployment, relief, civil rights, the Labor Board, unions, and all sorts of non-merit job security and promotion programs tend to wash away both the punishment and the reward methods. Too many employees are being sold on the idea that they no longer need to please either their employer or the customer in order to hold or to advance in a job.

The only other method we know is an effective appeal to personal pride and self-respect. Laziness and poor workmanship were once considered forms of sin. Today, in the minds of a frighteningly large number of people, conscientious work is only for the "squares." Even company publications stress employee recreation--rather than work achievement or customer satisfaction.

If Americans continue to lose their will to work, they will lose America's greatest asset. Americans will never be as prosperous or happy as they would have been if these qualities had not been lost. We can each help by making our own place of employment one where only good work is acceptable. We can help by encouraging better understanding of the truth that nothing can be distributed until it has been produced and, particularly, the understanding that these "something for nothing" programs are a double drain upon the public welfare.--(From an article by the American Economic Foundation.)