

Labor Is On the Job For Victory

The ONLY REALLY INDEPENDENT WEEKLY in Mecklenburg County PRINTED AND COMPILED IN CHARLOTTE AND FOR A WEEKLY ITS READERS REPRESENT THE LARGEST BUYING POWER in Charlotte MECKLENBURG COUNTY IN ITS ENTIRETY



The Charlotte Labor Journal

Endorsed by the N. C. State Federation of Labor

AND DIXIE FARM NEWS

Official Organ of Central Labor Union; Standing for the A. F. L.

12 YEARS OF CONSTRUCTIVE SERVICE TO NORTH CAROLINA READERS

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YOUR ADVERTISEMENT IN THE JOURNAL IS A GOOD INVESTMENT

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 1943

JOURNAL ADVERTISERS DESERVE CONSIDERATION OF THE READERS

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AMERICAN INDUSTRY, MANAGEMENT, LABOR HAVE DONE STUPENDOUS JOB IN THIS WAR DESPITE ATTACKS BY A LABOR HATING PRESS AND SOME "OBSESSED POLITICIANS"

Excerpts From An Address By

L. METCALFE WALLING, Administrator

Wage and Hour and Public Relations Divisions, U. S. Dept. of Labor before the Joint Labor Industry Meeting, Springfield, Mass., March 5th, 1943.

American industry, management and labor together, have done a stupendous job in this war. We have to do better. We have to have more production and still more production. But in getting it, in setting ourselves to the stern task of getting still more production, there is no reason we should blind ourselves to the really splendid job we have done to date. When you are climbing a hill and you still have a distance to go to get over the hump, it may hearten you to consider the progress you have already made.

As I read the newspapers, however, it sometimes seems to me as if a good many of them feel as if all our toil so far on the home front had been a flat failure. I see denunciations of American labor. Sometimes I see denunciations of American management. Now I say to you that neither of these furthers better production. I SAY TO YOU THAT THESE GENTLEMEN WHO USE THE PRESS HAD BETTER TRY TO REMEMBER THAT IT IS HITLER AND TOJO THEY OUGHT TO BE FIGHTING, NOT TRAINING THEIR SIGHTS ON FELLOW AMERICANS.

Actually, though we must do better and we all must do better to bring a free world to free men, our war production has already astonished our enemies. They thought we couldn't stick to our last. They thought we would get to fighting among ourselves instead; and some of our current controversialists in the press seem to be doing their best to fulfill their fondest hopes. I say to them, let's have just one war at a time; let's save their private war, if they have one, until after the victory.

It all reminds me sometimes of the story of the Georgia boy who had won his way to Officers' Candidate School and had passed all the tests and then came up before the psychologists to have his mental reactions tested. They shot him a tough one. They said, "What would you do after you became an officer if your State of Georgia seceded from the Union?" Without a pause the boy said, "Don't you think we ought to get this over first, Suh?" I don't think there is any question that the great majority of Americans agree with that boy from Georgia. The great majority of us are dedicated to getting this war over first before we go out after any private, personal targets.

Let's look at the record. Let's look at the record of the last war and compare it with what we are doing today. You know what you are doing here in Springfield. You have read, above the tumult and the attacks on Labor or on Management, what the rest of the country is doing: How our war materials are supplying our allies in all the corners of the earth and how we produced four and one-third times more tanks and guns and planes and ammunition last No-

vember than we had produced in the month before Pearl Harbor.

Some time ago I had occasion to look back at the old newspapers of 25 years ago, the newspapers of early 1918 when the world war had been in progress three and one-half years, about the same length of time as the present war. We ourselves had been in the war just a little less than a year. I wish you yourselves would some time go to a library and go back and look at the headlines of those papers. You would find it a heartening experience and you would find it made you proud of the war effort on the home front that you have been able to contribute to today.

Twenty-five years ago the day I happened to look, all industry east of the Mississippi River had been ordered shut down for five days and for nine subsequent Mondays—14 days out of production altogether—to save fuel for railroads and homes and for ships to carry abroad the munitions desperately needed by our allies to withstand the coming German spring drive.

This was the coldest winter in the history of New England. The coal famine had become steadily worse since before New Year's Day, the second coldest day ever recorded, which had found many cities with less than a days supply of fuel.

On that day, incidentally, the papers had reported the Chief of Ordnance testifying "That within ten days there will be enough rifles for every man in camp" if they could only be transported where they were needed.

The headlines told of a scorching reply by President Wilson to the Democratic Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee—long since forgotten—who was using Congressional investigations of the war effort to try to force a War Cabinet on the President and who charged that "the military establishment of America has broken down" because of "inefficiency in every bureau and every department of the United States Government."

The day after that your headlines were to tell you that a Republican Senator, the most powerful political boss in the country "Sees a Halt in Blanket Authority; suggests, now that President has Raised Issue, Congress will hold up extraordinary powers."

A CONSERVATIVE LABOR MAN WRITES INTELLIGENTLY UPON SUBJECT OF "ABSENTEEISM"

By I. M. ORNBURN,

Secretary-Treasurer Union Label Trades Department American Federation of Labor

Even before Pearl Harbor labor was fully aware of its responsibility in the national policy of making this country the arsenal of democracy. In fact, since the beginning of Lend-Lease shipments, labor knew that upon its efficiency and co-operation rested the success of production and delivery to those of our Allies who were then fighting alone. After Pearl Harbor this sense of responsibility on the part of labor has been infinitely strengthened, and our productive expansion is proof of that.

We are aware that national production has not been as good and as rapid as we want it to be. Anxiety of this subject is legitimate, because we must all be determined to overwhelm the enemy and to win this war as quickly as possible. But we should not fool ourselves about difficulties, so that when our goals of production are not realized we must not be led to despair. Rather must this failure serve as a stimulus for overcoming obstacles and for further intensification of the war effort. Labor knows as well as, if not better than, any other group that this war for the survival of democratic institutions is its own war for life or death, because upon these institutions rests its very existence.

It is because of this awareness of our war aims that organized labor often loses patience, when they talk search of cheap causes, when they talk about "absenteeism" and point an accusing finger at labor as the sole responsible factor. Though it did not publicize it, absenteeism has been the concern of labor much before these professional faultfinders heard of the word. For months we have been thinking of ways and means of eliminating it completely. We know as well as anybody else that absenteeism may mean victory or defeat in North Africa or the Solomons, and every individual worker knows that absenteeism may mean the life or death of his own self in the services. We do not need self-appointed guardians to tell us that. Our concern with the problem was not prominent in the past, because we were looking for the cause of this disease of industry for the sole purpose of eradicating it. We knew that speeches would only stir up arguments at a time when action was necessary, and so we tried to find out first what were the circumstances producing absenteeism and second how we could help eliminate them.

Without throwing accusations against management, against the government or against other groups, as some people are invariably tempted to do, we discovered that there were a few concrete, specific factors which led to this national weakness. We found out that workers lived in crowded conditions, often away from home without any of the conveniences and relaxations that the home officers. We found out that the workers in many industries had no time to do their shopping because of overtime, they had no decent recreation, no decent meals and few eating facilities at the factories or around them. Then there is also the fact that the wage-earner works overtime and that his task is more intense and more fatiguing than before. We discovered, in addition, frequent difficulties in transportation. We also found that every war industry today employed a large number of women who often have responsibilities of home and children on their shoulders and are likely to have divided loyalties. Women in general are responsible for twice as much absenteeism as men because of difficulties in the home and in providing for the home. All of these problems are real and not imaginary, but they can be handled by true cooperation among labor, management, and the government—but not by reckless accusation and loose talk.

Labor has done and is doing its share in the solution of these difficult problems. It must have, however, the cooperation of management, the public and the government. Just as we are fighting for a common cause, we must pool our common efforts to

Six weeks would pass before Food Administrator Herbert C. Hoover, was to announce that temporarily people could forget about the meatless meal a day and porkless Saturday. He asked the people to abstain from beef and pork only on Tuesdays thereafter but to continue wheatless Mondays and Wednesdays and one wheatless meal with no bread all other days in the week as they had been doing.

Does any of this sound reminiscent to you? Does it sound more orderly than the present? Do you think of reading of their own files would lead newspaper editorial writers really to want to go back to that halcyon last war?

If you go back to the newspapers of 25 years ago you will read of the waves of strikes in 1918, the millions of man days' of lost production. Twenty-five years ago the War Labor Policies Board of that war had not yet even been appointed. After it got going, to end the labor dislocations, labor pirating and stoppages that were hampering war production, it recommended a change over in the midst of battle to a universal eight-hour day with time and a half for overtime. The war was over before this could be put into effect.

OPA LABOR ADVISORY UNIT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED HERE; COMMITTEES HAVE BEEN NAMED

The A. F. of L. Railway Brotherhoods, Typographical Union and the C. I. O. have representatives on an advisory committee to aid the Office of Price Administration in an effort to control living costs and prevent inflation, this being the first body of a like nature to be formed in the South.

L. W. Driscoll is district office manager. Robert R. Brooks, of Washington; labor representative on the OPA board was present and addressed the meeting, having been loaned the Government by Williams College, where he is serving as professor of industrial relations. He also has taught at Yale University, from which he received a degree and attended Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar.

Mr. Brooks went from the Charlotte meeting of Atlanta to participate in a similar assemblage of representatives of organized labor there. He was delighted not only with what the group of about 90 persons from the 48 counties of the Charlotte OPA district accomplished in the forming of their advisory committee but also with the spirit of those attending. In many communities labor groups still fail at times to co-operate with each other in advancing programs of mutual interest, he declared.

"Labor unions can no longer best serve their members by getting wage increases or shorter hours," he told the assemblage, "but by exercising control over prices. Organized labor finds itself in an unusual position. For a generation organized labor in what apart. But now is the time some communities has stood some apart. But now is the time for it

to face the price control program from the standpoint of the consumer because everybody is a consumer."

Named on the executive committee were H. G. Fisher of Salisbury, secretary-treasurer of the North Carolina Federation of Labor; J. H. Fullerton of Charlotte, C. I. O.; T. V. Griswold of Charlotte, railway brotherhoods; and Howard L. Beatty, of Charlotte, International Typographical union.

Members of the advisory committee, named at recess meetings of the four labor parent groups, are: A. F. of L.—H. G. Fisher, of Salisbury, J. A. Moore of Charlotte, and Cy Chisholm of Winston-Salem; Congress of Industrial Organizations—L. B. Holden and H. A. Bean, United Rubber Workers of America, and J. H. Fullerton, all of Charlotte; International Typographical union—H. L. Beatty of Charlotte, O. S. Trigg of Greensboro, and Henry A. Stalls, of Charlotte; Railway workers—T. V. Griswold of Charlotte.

In the past union participation in OPA's program has been negligible and labor has been represented on OPA boards only as a result of well-organized pressure campaigns. If labor takes advantage of the opening offered by Brown there will be opportunity to work inside OPA for a real price control and rationing program.

Journal Editor Appointed To War Panel Board

William M. Witter, Editor of the Charlotte Labor Journal for the past 13 years and one of the founders of the Charlotte Typographical Union, has been appointed as the Labor member of a panel to sit in on hearings concerning labor disputes in this area.

The appointment comes from the National War Labor Board through the Regional Director at Atlanta, Mr. Carl K. Wettengel.

The panel will consist of a representative of management, labor and the public. The other two members will be named shortly.

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