

# Editorial

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## PRODUCTION IS ONE KEY TO AVERT INFLATION

"There is a pressing need for expanding production and increasing consumer purchasing power if we are to avoid a period of boom and bust and danger to our free private enterprise system," says George M. Harrison, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks and Fifth Vice President of the AFL in an article prepared for the American Federationist.

"Greater production is essential if we are to avoid further inflation and its destructive consequences. Full production and increased consumption is the key to real prosperity for all.

"To get the needed production, the first step is to remove all governmental wartime restraints and controls that interfere with the full exercise by our people of their democratic rights, so as to give industry and labor the opportunity to cooperate in the national interest. Supply and demand must be brought more nearly into balance.

"While recent price increases will cut demand to some extent, the real cure is more production, accompanied by a reduction in prices and greater consumption.

"At this critical period we need a larger appreciation of our national interest, our respective rights and mutual responsibilities. Our system of private competitive capitalism must continue to be the foundation of our nation's peaceful and expanding economy. We must re-establish the rights of private property and free choice of action. Free competition and free men are the strength of our free society. Management of industry must enjoy the inherent right to fulfill the responsibility of directing the operations and securing a reasonable profit.

"American private industry faces the opportunity of a century to produce on a scale greater than ever heretofore attained. It is an opportunity to establish an economy of plenty in America instead of scarcity; an opportunity to supply jobs and provide increasingly better living conditions and advantages for the American people—in short, the opportunity to justify the advantages of our free enterprise system. But freedom of enterprise implies no license to exploit the people and to engage in practices destructive of our economy and national interest.

"We have passed from that period in our national life when many owners of industry and property believed that free enterprise and private ownership vested in them the power to dominate and control those who work for them. Freedom of enterprise cannot be enjoyed by the owners and managers of industry and denied to labor under our democratic form of government.

"If we are to maintain free enterprise in America with all that the term implies, we must also maintain freedom of labor with all that it implies. Certainly there is a clear and inseparable relationship between the two which makes the maintenance of one contingent upon the maintenance of the other.

"If we claim for the owners of industry and management the right to own and manage property, to earn a fair return upon their investment, and to risk and explore in the field of industry and financial activities free from governmental interference and domination, it appears clear we must recognize that labor possesses the right to work and serve as free men and women, to organize for mutual protection, to bargain collectively and to exercise its economic strength and power just as management and owners of industry control their finances and their investments.

"The independence and dignity of the individual and the enjoyment of his democratic rights are inherent in our free American society. Labor does not agree with those persons in America who hold free enterprise in contempt or who would seek to deprive the working people of their liberties and freedom of action. Increasing production can only be achieved by that spirit of tolerance of the full rights of all and by co-operation in the national interest."

## GOVERNMENT BOARD FAVORS GUARANTEED WAGE

A guaranteed annual wage can help importantly in stabilizing the American economy and in pointing to an enduring prosperity, according to the conclusion of a special Government study.

The formal report, made at the request of the White House, was presented by a group headed by Murray W. Latimer, former chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board.

Discussing the current demand for guaranteed wages as a "normal and perhaps inevitable result of the sequence of economic events since the First World War, the report said in part:

"During and for a brief period following the First World War, the level of economic activity reached new and unprecedented heights. Following a severe but short-lived depression, a still higher level of activity was achieved in the twenties, followed by the most severe depression of modern industrial history.

"The demand for wage guarantees is a response to experience. On the one hand, the response regards the high levels of economic activity achieved as proving that large production and security earnings can be maintained; on the other hand, it regards the economic fluctuations of the past as establishing the need for assurance that earnings and living standards will be maintained. The demand for wage guarantees is essentially a demand for the security of substantial and regular earnings."

Projecting firmly into the picture the conviction that unemployment insurance has not proven the answer to the workers' hunt for security, the report declared:

"Unemployment insurance benefits are no substitute for pay. They are, one the average, less than half pay. The durations of benefits are almost everywhere briefer than is desirable.

"Employment experience rating in unemployment insurance has not acted, to any substantial degree, as an incentive to employers to stabilize employment. Instead, experience rating has encouraged employers to seek means to avoid paying benefits and has produced competition among employers to seek means to avoid paying benefits and has produced competition among the States to lower contributions and benefit standards."

All unemployment insurance reserves, the report pointed out, "have accumulated huge reserves—reserves sufficient to pay benefits for the maximum duration to a large percentage of all covered workers. The possibility that any such reserves will be required is extremely remote."

Although he made the point that the group making the study recognized that a guaranteed wage constituted no immediate panacea, Mr. Latimer added:

"On the other hand, it recognized that it is quite clear that widespread wage guaranteed systems can be made a substantial contribution to the stabilization of the economy through the stabilization of wage-earner income, and, hence, consumer expenditures."

# LABOR—U. S. A.

The twenty-second edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

### LABOR LOOKS AHEAD

By Irving Brown, European Representative of the AFL

Europe today is a sputtering fuse which, if neglected and left unguarded, may touch off another world-wide explosion within our time.

The one hopeful factor in post-war Europe is the great resurgence of its labor movements. Free trade-unionism is the most powerful force for the revival of democracy among the nations of Europe which are not completely dominated by Soviet Russia.

We must face the facts. Free enterprise or capitalism, as we know it in America, has practically disappeared in Europe. The political and economic struggle in Europe is between the totalitarian socialism of Russia and the democratic socialism of Great Britain. Today the Russian brand of collectivism holds sway in Eastern Europe up to the Elbe. It prevails also in the eastern zones of Germany and Austria, which are under Russian control. In France the Communists are the strongest single political party but strong opposition is developing to end their domination of the French trade union movement.

Our hope for the future of Europe lies elsewhere. It lies with the newly reorganized trade unions which are being rebuilt in the western zones of Germany and in other nations now freed from Nazi oppression.

The American Federation of Labor firmly intends to help the free and democratic unions of Europe to get back on their feet because they represent the last hope of rallying the people of Europe effectively for the preservation of peace and freedom.

To that end, the recent AFL convention authorized the opening of a permanent office in Europe. I am leaving for the other side next week to take charge of it.

Through this office relief and assistance, provided by AFL members throughout America, will be channeled to the workers of Europe and their free trade unions. This is a continuation of our war-time program. We will endeavor to keep American union leaders informed on labor developments in Europe and bring to European workers the latest information on economic advances in America. The European office of the AFL will publish and distribute a monthly international bulletin in four languages—German, French, Italian and English, to spread this information far and wide.

We will also keep tabs on all international conferences and trade union conventions in the nations of Europe.

### FACTORIES' INVENTORIES PLACED AT \$400,000,000

Washington, D. C.—A report by the Commerce Department revealed that the value of manufacturers' inventories rose another \$400,000,000 in September to total nearly \$1,800,000,000. This advance just about equaled that of August and this increase has been maintained since the first of the year.

The Department declared that inventories are now \$2,500,000,000 above January 1, with the third quarter accounting for a \$1,600,000,000 increase. Higher prices had an important effect on the recent increase in dollar value of inventories, the Department pointed out. Every major industry had higher shipments, with the dur-

Finally, we hope to promote the exchange of trade union delegations so that both American and European labor movements can become better acquainted with their mutual problems and reach broader international understanding.

### REMEMBER THE VETERANS

By Lewis G. Hines, Legislative Representative for the AFL

Organized labor will not permit American war veterans to become forgotten men and women of this country. Veterans' problems did not end with V-J Day. In fact, their problems are a long way from being solved even now, more than a year after the war's conclusion. That is why the American Federation of Labor will participate along with 40 other large organizations in the National Conference on Veterans Affairs which begins here in Washington next Tuesday.

Even a casual glance at the subjects to be considered at this conference makes it painfully clear that our nation as a whole has failed to meet the needs of our returning veterans in many important respects. Especially is this true of housing. Also, too, many veterans still are unemployed. Partially disabled veterans have met heart breaking obstacles in trying to obtain jobs which they can perform efficiently if they were only given a fair trial. The whole question of Government responsibility for the welfare of veterans must be more clearly defined than it has to date in the GI Bill of Rights and other legislation.

About 1,800,000 members of our affiliated unions served with the armed forces during the war. So our concern with veterans' problems is not merely an academic question with us. It is a responsibility.

The records will show that our unions have helped hundreds of thousands of veterans to get their jobs back without loss of seniority. New jobs were found for many others at good pay and under the finest working conditions. Veterans were welcomed into the unions without being required to pay initiation fees. Of an estimated 100,000 union apprentices last October, nearly 85,000 were veterans and this number is being stepped up every day. More than any other organization in the country, our unions have succeeded in securing suitable jobs for disabled veterans.

When it comes to housing, I can truthfully report that the Building and Construction Trades Department of the AFL has labored unceasingly to get adequate legislation adopted by Congress and to speed up home construction. Our workers are ready to build millions of new homes the moment materials become available.

These are some of the tangible ways in which the labor movement is trying to get a break for the veterans.

### OVER 2,000,000 IN COLLEGE

Washington, D. C.—Marking an increase of 50 per cent over the previous peak, more than 2,000,000 students were attending the colleges and universities throughout the United States at the opening of the fall terms this year, it was revealed by the Federal Security Agency.

### AIR MAIL FLOW RISES

Washington, D. C.—Recent reduction to a 5-cent air mail charge has boosted transportation of mail by that method by 40 per cent, former Representative Ramaspeck reported at a meet here. He is now executive vice president of the Air Transport Association.



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