

Editorial

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Were it not for the labor press the labor movement would not be what it is today, and any man who tries to injure a labor paper is a traitor to the cause.
—AFL President Gompers.

THE MAYOR HAS CALLED FOR AID

Mayor Herbert H. Baxter is to be commended highly for proclaiming Saturday, January 29, as Dollar Day in the March of Dimes campaign. The Journal knows that the Mayor quickly responded to the urgent appeal of the Mecklenburg Foundation, in order to do the city's part in helping to see to it that our \$100,000 quota is raised.

There has been some talk that the campaign may be extended for another week if the quota falls far short of its goal, and in case this is done it will be nice if the City's head will also proclaim the following Saturday as a Dollar March of Dimes Day. We pass this on in order to be helpful in this campaign.

Truly, the need is most urgent. The populace should awake to the necessity of raising the quota and putting it a far way over the top. If another such epidemic as that experienced during the last summer and fall should strike our community the need for funds will soar into several hundred thousand dollars. We have patients receiving treatment at present which require around \$5,000 per week. This is just a common mathematical problem which each of us can figure up in a second.

The need exists and let's go all-out in an effort to do our best for those unfortunates who now need and who may need our help this year.

RETAIL PRICES DROP FOR THIRD STRAIGHT MONTH

For the third consecutive month the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported good news for wage earners and their families.

The bureau reported another drop of 0.5 per cent in the retail prices of goods and services during the month which ended December 15.

Food prices, falling for the fifth consecutive month, were chiefly responsible again for the drop in the retail price index as of December 15. The bureau reported the index on that date was 171.4 per cent of the 1935-39 average. The index had reached a peak of 171.5 in the late summer. The drop of 3.1 points amounts to 1.8 per cent.

The mid-December reading was 2.6 percent higher than a year ago, 29 per cent higher than in June, 1946, and nearly 74 per cent above the figure of August, 1939.

The November-December retail price declines included apparel, which fell one-half per cent. Fuel and house-furnishing prices dropped fractionally. Rents rose by 0.6 per cent.

Food prices reached their peak in July and by the year-end had fallen almost one per cent below the rate in December, 1947, whereas the indexes for groups other than foods ranged from 3 to 8 per cent higher than at the end of 1947.

The December food prices were 1.2 per cent below those of November and 5.4 per cent below the July peak. The food index in December was 205 per cent of the 1935-39 average and 41 per cent higher than in June, 1946.

Most classes of foods contributed to the decrease, led by a more-than-seasonal drop of 11 per cent in egg prices. Meat prices dropped 3.2 per cent in the month as lower tags on beef, lamb and most pork cuts more than offset sharp advances for salt pork.

Fresh fruits and vegetables advanced 2 per cent, led by sweet potatoes, lettuce, cabbage, spinach, onions and white potatoes. Prices of fresh green beans dropped almost 23 per cent in the month. Dried fruits and vegetables declined fractionally. Prices on canned goods were unchanged on the average.

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TURN YOUR MARCH OF DIMES INTO A MARCH OF DOLLARS—HELP COMBAT THE DREADED POLIO!



Advisory Council Urges Better Unemployment Insurance Program

Washington. — The Advisory Council on Social Security reported to Congress on the deficiencies of the present state-federal unemployment insurance system and recommended a 16-point program for its improvement.

In a report to the Senate Finance Committee, the council, which is composed of 17 prominent labor, business, and educational leaders under the chairmanship of Edward R. Stettinius, former Secretary of State, proposed greater benefits and a broadening of the system to include about 7,000,000 workers who are now excluded from unemployment insurance protection.

Nelson H. Cruikshank, director of the AFL's social insurance activities, served on the council as a representative of the American Federation of Labor.

The report highlights the following deficiencies in the present system which the council singled out for special criticism:

1. Inadequate coverage.—Only about 7 out of 10 employees are now covered by unemployment insurance.

2. Benefit financing which operates as a barrier to liberalize benefit provisions.—The present arrangements permit states to compete in establishing low contribution rates for employers and therefore discourages the adoption of more adequate benefit provisions.

3. Irrational relationship between the contribution rates and the cyclical movements of business.—The present arrangements tend to make the contribution rate fluctuate inversely with the volume of employment, declining when employment is high and when contributions to the unemployment compensation fund are easiest to make and increasing when employment declines and when the burden of contributions is greatest.

4. Administrative deficiencies.—Improvement is needed in methods of financing administrative costs, provisions for determining eligibility and benefit amount in interstate claims, procedures for developing interstate claims, and methods designed to insure prompt payments on all valid claims and to prevent payments on invalid claims.

5. Lack of adequate employee and citizen participation in the program.—Workers now have less influence on guiding the administration of the program and developing legislative policy than they should, and some employees, employers, and members of the general public tend to regard unemployment compensation as a handout rather than as social insurance earned by employment, financed by contributions,

and payable only to those who satisfy eligibility requirements.

The 16-point program for action by Congress was designed to correct these deficiencies, the report declared. Among the recommendations, the following are of special significance to organized labor:

1. The council urged lifting the limitation which excluded employees of small firms from coverage under the Federal Unemployment Tax act.

2. Employees of nonprofit organizations with the exception of clergymen and members of religious orders, should be granted the benefits of coverage by law, the council said.

3. The council urged the development of a procedure under which wage credits earned in more than one state may be combined for the purposes of the law.

4. On the subject of disqualifications, the report recommended a federal standard which would prohibit the states from (1) reducing or canceling benefits as the result of a disqualification except for fraud, (2) disqualifying those who are discharged because of inability to do the work, and (3) postponing benefits for more than 6 weeks as the result of disqualification except for fraud.

While signing the report, 5 members of the council appended a statement declaring in their opinion that regardless of the improvements made in the existing system, anything short of a national plan to replace the present state-federal system would not achieve the most desirable objective of attaining a highly efficient unemployment insurance program. These were: Nelson Cruikshank, Sumner H. Slichter, Harvard University professor; J. Douglas Brown, of Princeton University; John Miller, assistant director of the National Planning association, and Emil Rieve, president of the CIO's Textile Workers union.

HOW TO KILL A UNION

1. Don't attend meetings.
2. If you go, go late.
3. If the weather isn't pleasant, stay home.
4. Don't accept any office; it's easier to criticize.
5. Never approve anything your officers or committees do.
6. Don't pay your dues until you have to.
7. Don't bother recruiting new members.
8. Insist on official notices being sent you, but don't pay any attention to them when you get them.
9. Don't waste any courtesy at a meeting. It's up to your officers to take it.
10. When you don't like what's going on say so, but under no circumstances offer any constructive suggestions.
11. Devote most of your time talking; let someone else do the work.
12. If elected a delegate to a higher body or convention, don't bother about attending meetings.
13. Then you can report when you get home that the organization is in the hands of a political gang and that there is no use trying to do anything about it.
14. Look for hidden motives; don't credit brother or sister members with any ideals.
15. Don't co-operate with any officer or committee; make them co-operate with you.
16. Remember that you know more than anyone else about everything. If they don't agree with you, they're wrong.

(Reprint from Cleveland Citizen.)

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