Industry Goes Over The Top In Production

"The Battle of Production has been won," wrote Paul Mallon recently. "American industry went over the top in April, out of the preparatory organizing phase, and into the great American stride of mass production which no one can equal anywhere. From now on the production line on our charts will go nearly straight up."

That is an incredible achievement, and it takes incredible statistics to describe it. In April, our war production was at the rate of $40,000,000,000 a year. The June rate will be about 25 per cent. greater. And by the end of this year the economists confidently predict we will be producing at the rate of $70,000,000,000 a year.

In time to come, many learned books will be written telling just how private industry did this job—a job which is unprecedented in world history. Two years ago we were totally unprepared for war. Today we are outproducing nations which devoted most of their resources to getting ready for war, for a decade or more.

American industry has done far more than turn its plants from the production of the necessities and luxuries of peace to the production of the instruments of war. It has boldly pioneered new techniques. It has thrown old production prejudices to the four winds. It has worked on the basis that nothing is impossible.

The skeptics said, for instance, that the assembly-line principle could never be successfully applied to the manufacture of fighting airplanes. Ford, Boeing, Consolidated and other plants have proved otherwise—in Seattle, San Diego, Willow Run and elsewhere some of the finest military airplanes the world has ever seen are being made almost as swiftly as automobiles were made in the old days. Skeptics were certain forecasts of tank production were fantastically high. Chrysler and other makers, to the contrary, are today well ahead of the forecasts and are going farther steadily.

All over the country plants, little as well as big, are setting new production records in a hundred war-material fields. Delays still occasionlly occur because of lack of materials, labor difficulties, etc. But those delays grow fewer.

There is only one dark spot—merchant ship output. The shipbuilders have done an excellent job in the face of staggering technical difficulties, but the fact remains that United Nations' losses are somewhat ahead of replacements. For some time delivery of steel plate was behind schedule. However, existing yards are steadily increasing their output, and some gigantic new yards, on both the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards will shortly go into operation.

The warship building program is reported ahead of schedule. Special emphasis is laid on the production of the destroyers which are needed for convoy duties, and for protecting ships-of-the-line in naval squadrons. And the U. S. submarine fleet is growing satisfactorily.

Not until the war is over and the information is of no use to the enemy will it be possible to tell the whole story of America's production effort. What can be said now is that no nation or group of nations ever did so much in so short a period of time. At the end of the last war, Von Ludendorff wrote, in bitter admiration, that the United States understood how to wage war. The cold production figures show that the United States understands it better still today.

OPA APPROVES GAS AND TIRES FOR LABORERS

Senator Tydings has announced that the Office of Price Administration has agreed to authorize leaders of migratory laborers in Southern States to purchase necessary gasoline to enable them to reach Maryland and other seaboard States to harvest maturing food crops.

The Maryland Senator made this announcement after placing the matter before Paul M. O'Leary, assistant price administrator, who will issue the necessary authority to the migratory labor leader groups through F. B. Gambrill, the farm placement supervisor at Baltimore.

Senator Radcliffe and the entire Maryland Congressional delegation has been cooperating in working out means of getting the surplus farm labor transported from the South to harvest Eastern Shore crops.

After talking to Mr. O'Leary, Senator Tydings pointed out that the law provides that "persons, who in the nature of their work have to leave one place for another, may receive gas and rubber necessary to make the journey."

He said also that "in so far as transportation is concerned, the favorable action on my request for special letters indicates there should be no further difficulty.

"I believe those letters will clear the way for these workers to come north to work on the Eastern Shore," he explained.

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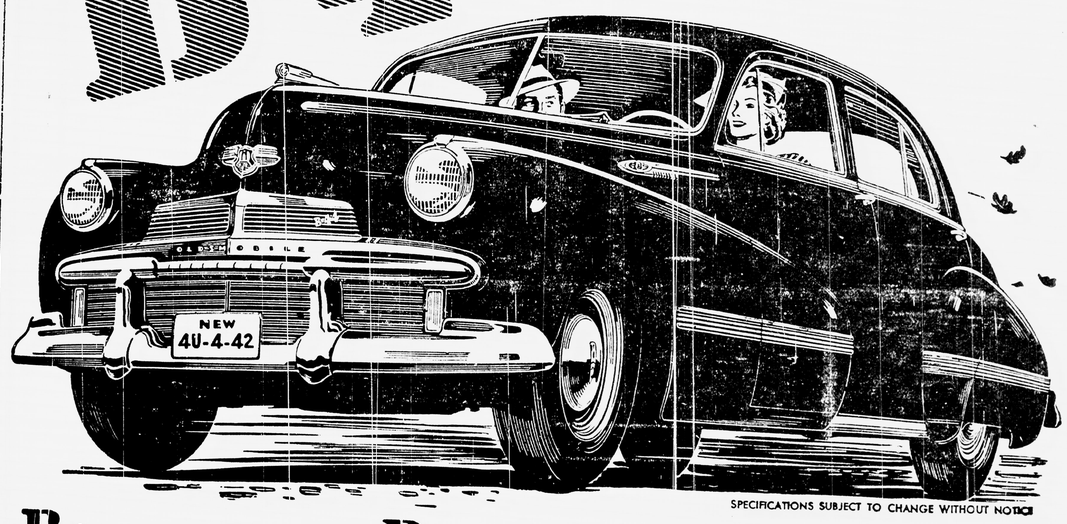

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