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DO IT NOW DO IT NOW

THE AMERICAN UNION

DENTON MARYLAND

MOVING OR MOVED?

If any of our patrons have been unfortunate enough to have had to move this year will you kindly notify this office so that we may see to it that your paper is sent to the proper address. We thank you.

Pay Your Subscription

A contemporary gives the following advice to its delinquent subscribers: "If you have frequent fainting spells, accompanied by chills, cramps, corns, bunions, epilepsy and jaundice, it is a sign that you are not well and liable to die any minute. Pay your subscription in advance and thus make yourself solid for a good obituary notice.

Peter Tumbledown spends a good many evenings at the store trying to figure out how the United States is ever going to pay its war debt. He is losing both flesh and sleep over the problem; but fortunately this worry keeps him from remembbering that his name is on the delinquent tax list, and he has not the slightest idea how he is going to get off "Farm Journal"

HOWARD URGES TRADE HONESTY

(Continued from Page 1)

that many of you have gone through processes of reorganization. You would be glad to produce if you could do so at a profit. Because the farm market is the world's big market, your profit can best be served by the restoration of the farmer's buying power or his exchange ratio. The farmer would prefer to see this done by the bringing up of his product to a higher price level rather than the bringing of other commodities down to the farmer's level, but unless the farmer's price level is rapidly raised, it is as inevitable as that night follows day that other commodities will crash to the farm level and moral, economic and social disaster may follow.

Let me point out two or three things in which we are possibly mutually interested. Much has been said regarding labor and the farmer's attitude toward labor. It has even been stated that possibly the farmer may unite with organized labor in a political or commercial organization. Let me say that the farmers of America are not going to affiliate politically or commercially with either labor or industry. Our relationship toward both is one of friendly accord which seeks that cooperation which is for the best interests of all. We are the largest employers of labor. There are employed on the farms of America 13,000,000 wage earners, which is more than are employed in any other industry. We have said repeatedly that the wage earner is our best consumer and we desire a wage paid which will enable the laborer to maintain a good and constantly improving standard of living. Wages, however, should be determined not so much in dollars and cents as upon an exchange relationship. So far as wage schedules are concerned, the farmer is best served by that schedule or wage which will result in the largest aggregate ested in a wage schedule so high or a sum paid to labor. We are not interworking agreement so limiting as to restricted production. The laborer result in material unemployment or himself should be interested in a maximum or surplus production for it is only as maximum or sulplus production is reached that standards of living are raised and any effort toward a restricted production tends to higher cost prices for the things which we all, including labor, must purchase. The higher cost levels mean a decrease of commodity purchases which tends directly to the lower standards of living.

The farmer has never been able to compete with industry in wage schedules. Our labor has never been so well paid as yours. For that reason, the best of the young men from the farms have left the farm and have gone into the business world. I dare say many of you present are living examples of this fact. If equal business and social opportunities had been afforded you on the farm as were promised you in industry, you would not have left the old homestead. I trust the time may soon come when the farmer may be able to pay the same wage for the same hours of work that industry pays. It is only fair to the farm laborer that this condition should be brought about, but since tillable acres are not any longer rapidly increasing and since urban population is gaining on rural population, since agricultural imports are gaining on agricultural exports, it is essential to both American agriculture that the best and most progressive of the manhood of America remain on the farms.

Too Much Spread

The spread between consumers' and producers' prices has been gradually increasing as urban population has developed. A part of this increase of margin is healthy and indicates normal development. It has, however, grown to such a degree as to become dangerous. The report of the Joint Agricultural Inquiry Commission of Congress, which is just being published, indicates that the farmer received 37 per cent. of the consumer's dollar. This margin must be materially reduced. It means that our distributing agencies must be simplified. The co-operative marketing movement which some of you view with alarm is merely a demand to you and to the American public to decrease this margin. The condition which brings about 10c hides and $10 shoes cannot endure. Neither can 8 cent cattle and 40 cent beef steak be justified by any fair-minded, red-blooded American citizen.

The farmer has been studying wholesale and retail prices with regard to his own products and I want to say to you today that the retail merchants of the country maintaining high prices in splte of the falling farm market and the falling wholesale market are not only guilty of profiteering but their attitude becomes an absolute menace to the financial, the moral and the social welfare of the nation. I say this fully cognizant of the fact that in some localities and on some commodities there have been slight reductions in retail prices. Rates of exchange as between wholesaler and retailer and retailer and consumer must be placed and maintained upon a fair rate before your factories can again successfully operate or before labor can get its fair relationship of exchange.

Injustice to Agriculture

There are things which the farmer views as injustices—they are the credit accorded him, both as to amount, rate and maturity, the high costs of transportation and the inexcusable margin between wholesale and retail prices. As basic producers of approximately half the nation's wealth, we are accorded, according to the comptroller of currency, 14 per cent. of the national bank credit, for a time averaging less than ¼ his turnover period and at higher rates than any other people pay.

Our transportation problems are more grevious than yours because we are charged all transportation costs from farm to factory and cannot add them to our production costs as you do, while on everything we buy factory to consumer freight is charged to us. It catches us "comin' and goin'."

The retail problem is as much yours as ours and we want you to join in our earnest protest against high prices.

If these three things can soon be remedied it may save the country from what some people might term a radical move amongst farmers.

I referred briefly to the fact that the farmer is interested in co-operative marketing. Let me say, however, that, like you, we must have markets before we have marketing. So long as we are a surplus producing nation, either in agriculture or industry, we are interested in world affairs and conditions. A few months ago I was discussing the future of American agriculture with a representative of one of our big eastern industries. He said to me that agriculture was of only secondary importance in America but that we were destined to become the world's greatest manufacturing and commercial nation. I did not dispute at that time the fact that we migh become the world's greatest manufacturing nation—I hoped he was right. I still hope that his optimism regarding industry may be realized. I did not and do not yet concede his contention that agriculture is of secondary importance. I then stated, and repeat to you today, that neither agriculture nor industry can prosper in America at the expense of the other, but that we must have a unified national policy, taking into account every factor of our commercial, agricultural and economic existence, if our greatest success is attained.

A Betrayal of America

I want to tell you, however, a story, which is a little discouraging, regarding the future of American business. Less than a week ago, I attended an informal luncheon, at which sat regularly accreditd representatives of three foreign nations, one from northern Europe, one from central Europe and the third from the southern hemispher. We were discussing some things which concern us all, and I referred to the statement of the eastern busniess man, about which I have just told you. We had discussed our great national gold reserves, our agricultural production and our declining prices and had referred to the opportunity which American manufacturing and American commerce had to become dominant in world's trade. To my surprise, the representative from the southern land said that such a thing could never be; that it was impossible for American commerce and American manufacturing to take first place in the world's trade. His reason for this concerns every farmer in America; it concerns every business man in America. I am bringing it to you as nearly as I can recall in his own words. He said: "Our trade with America comes to us through jobbers and brokers, as well as from manufacturers direct. We are assured that a certain grade of goods will be delivered to us on certain conditions, but the contracts are not faithfully kept by Americans. To illustrate, a New York jobber will sell a hundred thousand pair of hose in my country. After he has taken his orders he will go back to New York and if he can profitably buy hose of the same grade as the sample shown to fill the order he will do so, but if he cannot make a profit on hose of the grade contracted he will substitute an inferior grade. It is not so with other countries. When we buy buy of an Englishman it is not necessary that we make any form of a contract. We merely inquire if his word is that of an Englishman, and that is all the guarantee we require. When we buy of a New York jobber we have no assurance of his honor in the fulfillment of his contract."

The representative from central Europe followed with a statement that that had been the experience of his country. He stated that they had bought large quantities of flour from this country, the flour to have been of a certain grade, but that inferior grades were indiscriminately substituted and that as a result the output of the American miller was in disrepute in central Europe.

I have no reason to doubt the statements of these gentlemen. But you will note all reference was to selling agencies rather than manufacturing. If what they said is true, it is a serious indictment against American business. You are vitally concerned. The general public through legislation has provided for the proper governmental grading of our farm products. We have profited by it, and this fact gives me license to say to you that one-trip salesmanships and sharp practices are not in accord with sound or permanent business.

"God in Man"

That maxim of the old country school copy book, "Honesty is the best policy," is as true as it ever was. Not only is it the best policy, but, as a principle, it is the first necessity for success. "Man's word is God in man." Economics is but a study of human relationship. The same of economics was reached in a statement made up on a mountain top by a great teacher. I can do no more than to say to you that whatever our occupation or whatever our calling that the old Golden Rule of human relationship is just as sound economically and just as necessary morally today as when first enunciated.

I have no fear of the future, either of American agriculture or American business. Our problems will be solved and normal ratios be established. Our great concern should be that the time may be not long delayed. I am convinced the greatest epoch of our history is just ahead. May its sunrise find us with our morning work done and ready to go to the field.

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