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New York - Chicago - Boston - Philadelphia

Friday, January 15, 1944

More Than Meets the Eye

The CIO United Automobile Workers' efforts to justify their demand for a 30 per cent wage increase from General Motors on the basis of the "ability to pay" theory is blocking any hope for settlement of the wage controversy.

The Union leadership has advanced the "ability to pay" theory in its fight to "open the books" of the automobile Corporation and gain support for its contention that wages should be hiked to profits.

Actually fixing wages on the basis of "ability to pay" is wholly inconsistent with the Union principle of "equal pay for equal work," and in practice its application would prove disastrous to the earning labor's cause. Labor's objective always has been to steady as well as boost the wage structure; to guard it, so far as possible, from the shocks to which the dividend structure is subject.

Would labor be willing to accept an immediate cut wherever it could be shown that a company already was losing money? If a study revealed that General Motors could "afford" to pay higher wages than Ford or Chrysler, would the UAW-CIO demand higher wages from GM and accept lower wages from its competitors? Would the workers at Ford and Chrysler accept such an arrangement? Hardly.

If "ability to pay" were a sound basis for fixing wages, why wouldn't it be equally sound for fixing prices? Stop pass you walked into an automobile showroom, asked the salesman how much he wanted for a new car, and he replied: "How much have you got?" And suppose, further, he insisted on peering into your bank account before announcing what the price would be—for YOU?

The Union's strategy is plain. It wants to feed out what the most profitable manufacturer in the industry can afford to pay; then it would like to force every other concern to pay the same amount. This would force the less profitable companies out of business, precipitate widespread unemployment and generate no-thingness.

General Motors has charged that the UAW-CIO's campaign to "look at the books" for information on the Corporation's "ability to pay" is nothing more than a clever catch phrase—a subterfuge—intended as an opening wedge whereby the Union hopes to usurp management's present prerogative. The Union already is re-

aching not for information but for new power, not for a reasonable wage increase but for power to sit in and control Corporation operations.

More Progressive Farming

The farm population of the United States in 1940 was more than 30 million; there were 1,000,000,000 acres of land in farms. That is the basic foundation of the Nation's "bread basket." And yet, the place of farm manufacturing, while other agriculture machinery ranked at 60 in importance, full-fashioned hosiery, cotton yarn, rayon, dyes, footwear, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, and products and articles too numerous to mention topped the record of farm machinery.

All of this points clearly to the fact that the major part of farm labor is manual labor. Mothers and the boys and girls are working almost twice as many hours as factory laborers—and part of their drudgery is milking the cows. Did you ever see electric milkers in action? They milk a cow so fast that beside doesn't have time to switch her tail into the milk pail.

Of course we have all seen farm tractors—they do most "work" with one or two men engaged most of the time in sitting still and watching them a half-dozen farm hands. A modern farm with modern farm machinery looks so comfortable to the untutored "city-dweller" that he would be tempted to give up his place in town and retire to an easier life on a well developed, machine-operated farm. He forgets that the farms of our country have been made possible by hard work, and frugal living.

Secretary of Agriculture, Anderson reminds his countrymen that only a century and a half ago the United States was predominately an agricultural nation "with 10 out of 10 people living on farms and homestead self-sufficiency, but now less than 2 people out of 10 live on the land." While farming was still in the handicraft stage at the turn of the present century, its power was that of men and draft animals. The Secretary says that "the farmer of 1944 is far more productive than he was even five years ago," and he explains the reason briefly as follows: "He is making wider use of modern methods, modern machinery, and improved crops and livestock. He knows the need for soil conservation and is making rapid progress in the art of conservation-type farming. He knows more about the economic forces that regulate his markets and his prices, and he knows how to manage the national production of food and fiber to keep it in line with effective demand."

Every Family Interested

Only a short decade ago, the political and economic problems of the citizens of every state were primarily local instead of national. To day the problems most deeply affecting every citizen are national rather than local. One of the greatest problems in which every family is interested, is our future military program.

Just as we have allowed centralized government to absorb many of the functions of local government, so are we asked to favor one

central authority for our Army, Navy and Air Forces, thus eliminating the individuality of each and the inspiration of competition.

Germany was the greatest exponent of a centralized military organization. Italy was an advocate of the same idea. France, at different times, followed similar policies.

This war demonstrated that the United States can have a unified command of the various branches of its armed services in a national emergency, without having a military dictator in times of peace. There is need for haste in perfecting our military machine, but granting peacetime centralized military control over the three branches of our armed services must have the faintest consideration.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy, H. Starnes Hensel said, in the New York Times of November 22, 1943, "National security . . . is too large to be encompassed in any single organization. Even its military aspects are too diverse and too large to be rolled into one great mass or to be effectively controlled by some super-holding company."

If we retain our place as a nation of democratic ideals under the flag of a republic never needs less just more centralized government, and we must maintain military preparedness within the framework of our ideals of freedom.

NOT TOO HOT
NOT TOO COLD

This Is Revolution

The current stable situation is at last perfectly clear. It is nothing less than revolution. Traditional concepts of property rights, management rights and profit rights are threatened. To see the way the revolution is proceeding, consider the case of a single home industry—oil. Management and labor disagree, superficially, on the percentage of wage increase to be granted. Fundamentally, the disagreement was not over the adequacy of wages, measured by past standards. Real wages are at record levels. Labor leaders have frankly stated that they are out for a redistribution of profits. In the case of some one industry, they have demanded a look at the "books" to decide for themselves how profits should be shared.

When oil companies started at along and division of profits, the next step in the revolution took place. The government took over the companies. The workers went back to work pending a decision on the demands of their leaders. Now the negotiations have gone completely beyond the control of the oil industry. A three-man government "fact finding" board has been appointed by the President. The question is how will it decide to divide the profits of the oil industry? The members of the oil industry, men who have worked all their lives to build up companies that serve the public well and have always endeavored to pay fair wages and a fair profit to those investors who took the risk in the development of oil resources with out some of hard earned savings, now stand the outcome of the deliberations of these political appointees. They are helpless. The price paid for their products is well as as wages are at the mercy of political maneuvering in government.

If this is not revolution, what is it? Because it is, it explains why conservation and prudent production are dangerously needed.

"Cheap" Money, High Prices

It is a common experience to hear persons speak with a renewed vigor at the "monopolies" prices they are asked to pay for some of the necessities of life. Generally their minds run intelligently back to the market place. The most genuine spectacle of all is the way various groups will charge each other with being hoarders, while the housewife thinks they are all

robbers. The farmer blames the merchant, the merchant blames the farmer, and the consumer blames them both—when he is paying the price of a commodity. If he also pays the price of family necessities, he too, is a victim of some sort of thing or another. This is especially true in the normal behavior of a people in a land being visited by inflation. No one ever blames one animal Federal deficit of some billions when he looks at the high price of a desired article, but it is at the heart of our price problem. Put, so far as is ineliminable, does anyone ever rise up and damn the Federal Government for its spendthrift ways when he is ill treated by the eyes with rising prices?

As long as the government continues to function as hoarder of money, but so long will we continue to have alleged "price groups" in every walk of life. Business money has meant "cheap" money and high prices.



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