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The Farmer Shows The Way

A prosperous agriculture is essential to maintaining a high level of employment and a prosperous nation, the American Farm Bureau Federation declared in formal resolution recently. "We have learned through bitter experience that we cannot have a prosperous agriculture without an effective national farm program to maintain a fair balance between farm prices, industrial prices and wages," the Federation said.

Nothing new or startling about this. It is merely saying that prosperity stems from the land, and that unless the farmer, the basic producer, is enabled to produce at a profit, the whole country suffers. Few will dispute this assertion, but what are we doing about it?

Industrial workers are striking all over the place. Representatives of labor, management and government are sitting around council tables in attemps at settlement, and the probability is that when a settlement is arrived at it will ignore the basic producer who never strikes—the farmer. If history repeats itself an agreement will be reached which will provide for increased wages of the industrial workers and the farmer will continue to be taken care of through Government susbidies.

Isn't it about time that this this matter is approached realistically? About time that serious attention is paid to the foundation of the economic structure? About time that the prime producer is taken into consideration? And about time that he is given first consideration and not dragged in as an afterthought.

The Farm Bureau Federation is "unalterably opposed" to plans proposing unlimited production at ruinous prices and declares that farmers are as much entitled to a fair price in the market place as the industrial worker is to a fair wage, or industry to a fair price for industrial goods. But let us not forget the vitally important fact that the farmer as a class it not interested primarily in either prices or wages. He sees the dollar for what it is, a symbol, a medium of exchange. He is concerned with fundamentals, with exchanging the fruits of his toil for the more abundant life.

Somewhere the dizzy spiral of higher wages leading to higher prices and higher prices in turn forcing higher wages has got to stop. If the industrial wage earner, whose sights are adjusted to the dollar sign, could only see what he is really shooting at, it would be a real step forward.

As the situation stands we have the industrial worker, and the white collar worker, and the capitalist and middleman and just about every one else clamoring for more money. What they should be interested in is a greater share of goods produced, measured in purchasing power, and a greater volume of production to be shared. Lower prices would mean greater abundance and wider and more equable distribution. The farmer, perhaps without fully realizing it, is showing the way.

Fact-Finding not Factual

Recommendation of the Fact-Finding Board that considered the General Motors strike did not stay away from the "ability to pay" factor, in that the Board weighed predictions and projections as to what may happen in the way of future profits. In line with its earlier contention that it is the responsibility of management, not government nor unions, to handle such matters, General Motors was not able to accept the recommendation.

Distribution of earnings has been a function of management in America under the system that has been successful in making this country great. The union's persistent attempts to bring ability to pay into the discussions, prior to and in the period of the Fact-Finding Board's activity, have been especially noticeable. It has been an endeavor to bring into the negotiations a factor that would give the union a definite priority in the sharing of earnings of industry, at the ultimate expense of the purchasing public as well as of the investor or owner of the business.

As both the union and the company have pointed out, the basic issue in this particular dispute is more than wages. It is who is going to run the business, whether the union's rights include a hand in industrial planning and whether America is going to make a change in its free competitive enterprise system through government direction.

Things One Remembers

One reads in the newspapers of "picket lines" preventing the owners or managers of factory properties from having access to their own premises. One wonders why we refer to the United States as a free nation.Such circumstances indicate complete capitulation of the police powers of cities and states to the organized forces or revolution.

Suppose, for example, in a strike-bound plant, management would hire pickets to prevent employes from entering their own homes so long as they were on strike. Can you imagine such a condition being allowed to exist? And yet, legally and morally, where is it any different than labor union paid pickets preventing the owners and managers of factories from entering their own properties?

There are clearly two kinds of law enforcement in the United States today, and it is frightening to see how the rights of minorities are ignored by our lawmakers, our courts and our police power.

Who Knows?

Who knows whether the timber supplies in our country are dwindling so rapidly that lumber supplies will peter-out in the next ten or twenty years? Nearly fifty years ago a White House Conference attended by the wisest industrialists of the country told President Theodore Roosevelt that the forests were being steadily depleted. Attempts to grow new forests have failed to average anywhere near half the annual cut of standing timber.

Some of the high officials of the Government agree in the pessimistic prohesies that there will be no oil wells in the United States in another quarter of a century. There is good reasons to suspect that these gentlemen don't know what they are talking about, inasmuch as the highest authorities in the petroleum industries say there will be plenty of oil for anvwhere from one hundred to a thousand years. They have reasons.

Who knows what about atom bomb? Quite a few first-class Americans, and they most certainly won't give away any secrets. This writer has heard it discussed by the very tops in the making of the bomb—but all I know is that I know absolutely nothing, except "what I read in the papers" as Will Rogers used to explain.

What about rubber? Well, start in using the synthetics because those will be the tires of the future. American factories will turn them out, and the product will be so satisfactory that there will be a very small market in our country for natural rubber from the Pacific.

There is general sympathy for the boys who have fought and won the great wars in the East and West in their demands to get back home. Who knows how rapidly with the best intentions, the Army and Navy, can release the men in the military establishments? But, most people believe that the draft will soon be entirely scrapped. Military and Navy officials express the belief that during this year they can get enough voluntary enlisted men to meet all the needs for policing, and controlling the bad areas in Europe and the Pacific. Let's hope!

NOT TOO HOT NOT TOO COLD

The Shrinking Violet

Few people have forgotten the near disastrous coal mine strikes that occurred in the middle of the worst war this country ever fought. Those strikes were called over the question of whether the miners should be paid while traveling to and from work at the mine face—portal to portal was the battle cry. The public also remembers that nobody was starving at the time of the strikes. The following comment from the United Mine Workers Journal, is the "modest" rationalization of the situation by union leaders: "Three times in 1943 it became necessary for the U. M. W. A. to save the public from a coal famine that would have resulted from the obstinancy of the coal operator's determination to fight 'portal to 'portal and the government's hesitatancy to take the necessary action that would continue the mines in operation.

"The nation was then at war and every pound of coal that could be mined was needed. The action of the mine workers in voluntarily restoring the mines in operation by returning to work constituted a patriotic service that the nation will probably never fully appreciate."

This shrinking ilttle commentary neglects to mention that before the strikes were called off the unions demands were met in full and that the strikes caused millions of tons oc lost coal production; also, thatso far as the labor bosses were converned ,they were apparently willing to see the country go smash if their demands had not been met.

America Should Rule the Waves

Our Merchant Marine now has 442 ships, and an official statement indicates that we have 2,170 Liberty ships. Admiral Land, retiring chairman of American shipping affairs, says that the Liberty ships must be kept ready for use in case some foreign nation should get to acting up in Mussolini-Hitler style, even though it might cost seven to ten million dollars a year. "That's chicken feed considering they are worth five billion dolars; it's an insurance policy against another war," declared Land. From another interested source comes the following: "Why sell any of our ships to outsiders? It's like breaking a fellow in a crap game and then lending $10." At one time England had ships on every sea. Germany crept up on the Britains and threatened to outsmart them in competition. The United States was a weakling until after World War I.

Our country needs new blood in American shipping—men who understand that the United States should be the World leader in merchant shipping.

The Punch That Counts

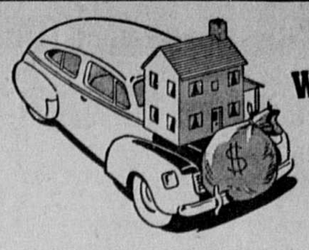
The recent non-stop flight of an army bomber from Guam to Washington, D. C., caused the Honorable Kenneth C. Royall, Under-Secretary of War, to remark: "As our thoughts range across the troubled vista of our postwar world, our minds dwell uneasily on the speed with which a new outbreak of international discord could vault the barriers, draw two and ocean and reach our farms and cities. From these thoughts, we as Americans, draw two lessons:

"First and foremost, we must do everything humanly possible to bring about world peace and preserve it. . . .

"And, second, at the same time that we are doing this, we must keep our own nation in a constant state of readiness to do its part in maintaining world peace and in repailing any sudden attack that may be made upon us. . . . ."

Don't Get Poor Quick

The above title reverses some of the old philosophies about getting rich quick. There are more ways to buy useless goods right now than at any other time within the memory of man. So, why not take the sage advice of William Shakesphere, speaking through one of the characters in a famous play, who said: "True; save means to live." That is a word to the wise. Keep out of "investment opportunities" of the kind that wrecked American Economy in the early 1930's, when millions of our citizens completely failed ao "get rich quick—thousands of them in the stock market, where they ran their heads against stone walls and lost all of their savings—and their shirts.



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