

ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE WAR EFFORT
4 April 1946.

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GENERAL ARMSTRONG:

Ladies and gentlemen, the direction we have given the work of the Industrial College in emphasizing the basic importance of manpower as an element in our economic potential, emphasizing it to a greater extent than we have ever done in prewar years, is convincing evidence of the importance we, on the staff of the College, attach to a closer association with the labor movement in the United States. We hope we shall have a far closer contact with the Unions, such as C.I.O. and the A.F.L., in the years to come. We, therefore, welcome the opportunity of having a research specialist of the C.I.O. here today to talk to us about his union and also about the labor movement in general.

Mr. Bernstein was, and is, a member of the research staff of the United Steel Workers of America since 1936. So far as I can make out he is sort of a liaison officer from that Union to the C.I.O. headquarters.

He and I have been discussing things in the office. I find he is exceedingly frank and objective. He also tells me that in the question period he will be glad if your questions are completely uninhibited. He is ready to take anything you offer. He is ready for that because he has just been a doughboy. He was out in the Solomons. He was one of those hardboiled sergeants, so he knows something about not only the Infantry but also the Air Forces, where he served for some time.

Mr. Bernstein is now the veterans' representative for the C.I.O. His subject is "Organized Labor and the War Effort" with particular reference to the C.I.O. Union. Gentlemen, it is a privilege to present to you Mr. Meyer Bernstein of the C.I.O. Union.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Thank you, General Armstrong.

I shall tell you something about the C.I.O. in the war effort, and also something about the organization of the C.I.O. I am afraid most people who are not intimately connected with the labor movement have a very limited understanding of just what the labor movement is; how it operates; some of its problems; its objectives, and so forth. I have, therefore, had distributed to you several samples of C.I.O. literature; things we have given out to our own people to explain what the C.I.O. stands for, and also to give them an idea of what we are trying to do. I have turned these things over to you not for the purpose of proselyting or influencing you in any way. It is merely to show you what we are doing and how we do it. If some of the propaganda has some effect upon you, I am very glad; if it does not, it is still all in the interest of the scientific dissemination of knowledge.

There is not enough point in saying the United States did a job on the home front. We all know that. It is not necessary to call attention to the number of guns, and ships, and planes and tanks we made. You all know that. I would like, specifically, to tell you something about how it was done and contrast the work done in this past war with the work done during World War I.

Many of you no doubt served in France in 1918. How many of you, while you were in the Artillery, for instance, fired an American gun? How many of you, who were in the Air Forces, flew an American-made plane? How many of you who went overseas traveled in an American ship? Of course we produced a great deal in 1917 and 1918, but most of it was not ready for use until after the Armistice. This time it was different. This time, the stuff was made on the American home front in plenty of time to be used and not only in time to be used but also in such quantities and such numbers as completely to overwhelm the enemy.

We did the job this time because we knew it better. We understood the problems better. We got started earlier. There was very little of the strife between management and labor that characterized the period 1917-18. I shall go into that in greater detail later on.

First of all, I merely point out the job was done this time. I want to illustrate it simply by showing how one American steel company produced its goods; just one company. This one American steel company produced more steel--just one--than all of Germany, Czechoslovakia and Austria. The U. S. Steel Corporation had a capacity on 1 September 1939 of 28,885,000 tons. That was their annual capacity of steel. On 1 September 1939 Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, combined, had a capacity of 27,900,000 tons. So one American steel company produced more steel than all of Germany before the war.

That is rather significant. I wonder if Mr. Hitler knew that just one American company could do this. The total American production at that time was 81 million tons. By 1945 it was raised to 95 million tons. The peak of Axis steel production in the war,--that is, in 1943,--combined--Germany, Japan, including all the occupied countries, such as France, Belgium, Luxemburg, and so on--had a total capacity of 75 million tons. That is contrasted with a United Nations total capacity of 138 million tons.

After VE-day this one American steel company I referred to had a production of twice the capacity of Japan, or some 32 million tons a year, which was the new capacity of U. S. Steel, as contrasted with 15 million tons a year for Japan, Manchuria and the occupied countries on the Asiatic mainland.

So, actually, the figures speak for themselves.

The American steel industry, which made the essentials of war, really produced the goods. This one steel company I mentioned produced 8 million tons of ship plate, all of it in time for use in the war; 1,162,000 tons of armor plate; 16 million finished shells, 40-mm and greater; 2.8 million bombs; 773,000 net tons of landing-mat steel; three million blitz cans;

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90,000 net tons of barbed wire; 1.4 billion springs; and 911 ships of LST- or greater size, including destroyers, destroyer escorts, cruisers and so on.

The American steel industry and American industry generally did the job. How did they do it? Well, we do not claim labor did the work itself. It did not. The people who manned the machines in the factories were helpful. The job could not have been done without them. It would not have been done without the same degree of cooperation they gave. The extent to which they cooperated with management to get this job done was responsible for the astounding success.

Now that is not my figure alone. Let me quote from the report of the U. S. Steel Corporation which, I might add, has not in the past been known as a particular friend of Organized Labor. The U. S. Steel Corporation report says:

"Through joint Management-Employee Committee meetings many wrinkles in production were ironed out that resulted in the establishment of new records. In the first year of the war, U. S. Steel employees broke 1,000 production records and by the end of the war had run the figure up to 5,000."

What were some of these committees, and how did they operate? Early in the war the War Manpower Commission and War Production Board decided that it was necessary to have the active participation and cooperation of labor with management to get the most out of the machines. It was plain we could not take more time to build more machines. We had to get more out of what we had.

Believe it or not, some of our companies in 1939, and even as late as 1941, were operating on a one-shift basis. That is, they would work eight hours, starting at seven in the morning, taking one hour off for lunch, and quitting at four or five o'clock in the afternoon. The machines they had were idle all the rest of the time.

There were a great many other examples of inefficiency in our American industry. To change almost over night, as it were, from the leisurely peacetime method of producing to the dramatically accelerated production necessary for war was something that required more than order. You could not do it by decree. You cannot operate a factory as you would a battalion in the Infantry. You cannot say, "As of tomorrow, you people will start working on a three-shift basis". It cannot be done in that way. Industry is not set up for that. It takes time on the part of both labor and management to work out a schedule. That was done. It was done through these Labor-Management committees; Management and labor coming together and planning all these things in advance.

It must be remembered that the C.I.O. was then only some five years old, six at the most. Our membership was comparatively new. We had sought in our organizing drive for the very things we had to set aside in order to win the war: limitations on hours of work; premium pay for overtime; shift differentials; production changes; excess operations, and so on.

Most of the things the C.I.O. stood for were things which had to be compromised in order to win the war. The reason for it is simple. We felt that labor, in working eight hours a day, was satisfying their obligation to management; it was not necessary to engage in a lot of "extras", as it were, in order to get the production out. We felt that if management wanted more from labor, it ought to pay more. We also felt there should be certain restrictions on, for example, the changes in job content and wage rates, and so on. We had just gotten to the place where we were able to get management to agree on many of our objectives when the war broke out. So we had to set these aside.

The national leadership of the Unions were willing and anxious to set these aside immediately. They met with the President in January 1942, and agreed that for the duration of the war all of our differences with management would be settled over the conference table. There would be no strikes. Well, of course, the C.I.O., A.F.L., management and the President knew very well that that would not be accepted 100 percent by labor-- or by management either. They knew there would be some strikes, and there were. They also knew there would be some difficulties in putting the program into effect, and there were. They knew it would take a long, long time for management and labor to sit down together on all issues, particularly where there had been a history of antagonism between the two.

I might point out that in 1941, just 10 days before Pearl Harbor, our own case against the Republic Steel Corporation, which resulted from the Little Steel strike in 1937, was settled. It was only 10 days prior to Pearl Harbor that the United Steel Workers of America and the Republic Steel Corporation agreed to sit down, bargain collectively, and settle all the differences that had arisen out of the strike of 1937.

It is important to remember that in that strike of 1937, 7,500 steel workers were fired by the Republic Steel Corporation. These men had just come back to work in 1941. They had just received back pay for the time they had lost. I had worked on that case personally. I knew those people. I knew something of their temper, too. They were angry; they were also mighty cocky. They had forced the Republic Steel Corporation to pay them for not having worked, something that was unheard of in American industry. They were going to stand on their own ego. They were going to insist that Republic Steel Corporation toe the line.

Just at that time the attack on Pearl Harbor came. The union did not force the Republic Steel Corporation to toe the line. There was then a more important consideration, namely, getting production out. We had to persuade our people, to "wait a minute until we agree". The Republic Steel Corporation did not like the union; it would have liked to break the union if it possibly could. The more important thing was to get our steel. We had to set aside all our differences, and our resentments, and our feelings all ill-will, for the duration of the war. For the most part we did it. I think the record speaks for itself.

On the other hand, there were many cases in which we did not do so well. Those of you who were overseas perhaps remember reading in your local papers of strikes back home. It is not my purpose to minimize the

strikes we had back home. We had plenty. We had more strikes back home during the war than we had in any similar period of peacetime operation. I do not want to gloss over the fact that those strikes caused a loss in production. Nor do I, for one moment, want to minimize the responsibility of the unions themselves, and all of their membership, for those strikes. We must accept our own share of it.

We have not done the job as well as we would like. The reason we have not done it so well was this background of antagonism; this background of hate and hostility, which had to be wiped out under the stress and strain of war. I think the important thing really is not that there were strikes, but for us to consider the nature of the strikes. I shall go into that in some detail.

First of all let us get some idea as to the number of strikes. In the years 1935 to 1939 there was an average of 2,862 strikes each year with a total of 1,125,000 workers involved, which was 4.4 percent of the working force. The total amount of time lost was 16 million man-days.

In 1942 to 1944 the average was 3,892 strikes each year, with 1,646,000 workers involved, which is 5.3 percent of the total employed. The total amount of time lost was 8,801,000 man-days.

All the figures show there were a great many strikes but the strikes were, for the most part, of short duration. In 1943, for example, there were 3,743 strikes, and of these 943 lasted one day or less; 1,325 lasted from two to three days; 716 lasted four days or less than one week; 506 lasted from one to two weeks, which all means that 94 percent of the strikes in 1943 lasted less than two weeks.

In 1944 the number of strikes and lockouts exceeded that recorded for any previous year, but the actual time lost per worker involved was less than in any year for which any information is available.

In this connection I might point out in 1944, as in most of the war years, the big strikes, those involving the most workers and the most time, were principally in the coal industry. Now, with all due respect for the coal miners and their unions, I think it is fair to say their activities are somewhat unpredictable. I do not think it is fair to blame the labor movement, generally, for them. They are something above and apart. They have had a long and varied history. A coal miner is a person whose understanding is pretty much limited to the needs of his union and his own job in the mine, and he usually acts accordingly.

So it is important to remember that most of these figures were weighted by the experience of the coal mines.

I think in order to show the great contrast between the strikes in wartime and those in peace, our figures for 1945 can be divided into two sections, namely, before VJ-day and after VJ-day. I should like to point out the contrast.

Before VJ-day there were 2,950 strikes, involving 1,750,000 workers, or a total of 9.8 percent of all workers involved, which amount to .17 of one percent of the working time.

After VJ-day, in the four months of that year, there were 1,700 strikes, with 1,575,000 people involved, which was a total of 15.2 percent of the total employed. The number of man-days lost was 25,750,000, as contrasted with 9,250,000 for the first 8 months of the year. In the first 8 months there was .17 of one percent of working time lost; in the last four months there was .93 of one percent of the working time lost.

I had some experience on strikes in wartime after I returned from overseas. Someone in the War Department discovered I was available and that perhaps I might be of some service to the War Department in its labor relations. For a period of some three months I was assigned to work in Detroit with the labor branch of the Sixth Service Command. While there I had an opportunity to see exactly what these strikes were and how they operated. I would like to give you some statistics on them. Here is the hotbed of industrial strife in America--Detroit. Detroit accounted for approximately one-third of all the strikes in the United States during the war. Let us see how these strikes in Detroit took place and how long they lasted.

During July, August and September 1944 there were a total of 223 strikes. Of these, 18 involved between one and 25 men and lasted less than two hours; 12 involved between 26 and 100 men and lasted less than two hours; four involved between 101 and 250 men and lasted less than two hours; two involved between 251 and 500 men and lasted less than two hours; two involved between 501 and a thousand and lasted less than two hours; three between 1,001 and 5,000, and none over 5,000. A total of 41 strikes, of these 223, lasted less than two hours' time.

Fifty-one strikes lasted two hours to one shift; 43 strikes lasted one shift to one day; 49 strikes lasted one day to three days; 29, three days to one week; and, finally, 10 from one week to two weeks' time. There were none over two weeks.

Summarizing, forty-five involved between one and 25 men; fifty-four, between 26 and 100 men; forty-two, 101 to 250 men; thirty-three, 251 and 500 men; twenty-two, 501 and a thousand; nineteen, 1001 and 5,000; five, 5001 and 7500; and three over 7,500.

In the three-month period 61 percent of the interruptions lasted one day or less. Only 4 percent lasted over one week. Less than 250 employees were involved in 63 percent of the interruptions while 12 percent involved over 1,000 workers.

All of you, I know, have read of certain companies where there were a number of stoppages. For instance, there were about 50 stoppages in the Ford Motor Company's River Rouge plant, where they employed 26,675 men and women. Now, if there were 50 real strikes during a few months' period, that must mean that production went down to zero. Well, actually, of these strikes only one involved 50 workers for a half hour and one involved 14 for

a half hour; 27, eight hours; 325, two and one-half hours, and so on. I have a list here of all strikes at the River Rouge plant of the Ford Motor Company. Here are the numbers involved, remembering there were 86,675 employees: 50, 14, 27, 325, 14, 60, 8, 57, 50, 18, and so on. The highest number is 2,475. That is the only one greater than 550. Just one involved more than 550.

The times of duration were one half hour, one half hour, 8 hours, 2-1/2 hours, 6 hours, 3 hours, 1 hour, 2 days, 1 hour, 45 minutes, and so on. The longest strike lasted for two days, involving 57 men.

It is true that those strikes caused interruptions. Some of these strikes involved key men, trained men in the plants. Most of them were in small departments. A few of the men, for example, had arguments with their bosses about some job they had to do. Well they took the time called for the strike to argue their case. They ought not to have done that. They should have settled the matter in conference, which they did not do. They were hotheaded. The final result is that production was lost.

The important thing to remember is that the production that was lost was really very small. All the strikes in any given year involved the loss of less time than was saved by the Unions voluntarily giving up their holidays (Labor Day, July Fourth). That actually saved more production in any given year than had been lost during the whole year in strikes.

Labor Day and the Fourth of July are two of the prime planks in any union's contract. Those two days are always to be holidays. Yet we saved more production by working those two days than had been lost in all the strikes of the year. That is not mentioned, generally, in stories about strikes. We tried to ignore it because the important thing was to get men back to work and if we had told them the strike did not amount to anything in comparison, there would have been more strikes. So we did not emphasize that. But now that the war is over it is important, I think, that you people should know the relative significance of these facts.

Well, I will now tell you something about the Union that did this thing and also tell you how it did it. What I say about the C.I.O. applies equally well to the A.F.L.--not in all cases, perhaps, but in general, yes. There is very little difference between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O., except in personalities. I can assure you that there is a great deal more cooperation between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. than the public generally knows about. I personally meet with representatives of the A.F.L. on the average of once every day or two. We are on the same committees. We function together. There is no difference between us except that the C.I.O. represent certain unions; and the A.F.L. represents certain other unions. There is, I might say, about the same amount of hostility between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. as there is between the Army and the Navy, although we sometimes are a little more outspoken about it. Also, we do not have anyone on top to push us down. We can usually express ourselves a little more freely than some of you people can. But, I suppose, that is one of the keynotes of a Democracy which necessarily cannot always exist in the Armed Forces.

The C.I.O. is not just something at 718 Jackson Place, in Washington. The C.I.O. is thousands of local unions. The local union is the fundamental unit of the union. It is the union. Everything the union does is done on the local level. In Washington we act as liaison with the Legislature, the Congress, the government agencies. We act on behalf of the local unions. We do only what the local unions want us to do.

The C.I.O. has one local union in each plant. The U. S. Steel Corporation has several score plants. Each one of those several score plants has a local union.

The local union elects its own officers. The officers are elected every year. The turnover in officers indicates the extent to which the membership determines its own policies. Now if they do not like someone, they can always get rid of him. In the Army, if you do not like your Captain you have to say "Yes, sir" to him any way. In the union, if you do not like your president, you can always vote him out. We have that opportunity each year.

There are some 11 officers in each local union.

In addition to these officers of the local, there is also a Grievance Committee. The Grievance Committee generally consists of as many men as there are departments in the plant, with one Grievance Committeeman to each department. This Grievance Committeeman is responsible for enforcing the contract.

Now there are always grievances; there always will be. As long as you have two men working together, you will find one of them is going to have a complaint some time. In your best contracts you are going to have complaints. There will be differences of interpretations.

So this Grievance Committeeman is charged with taking up grievances. For instance, suppose that a worker does not like something that has happened. He complains about not having been paid enough for a job he did; perhaps his hours are not just right; maybe time study is inaccurate, or possibly something else happens he objects to—he takes this matter up, then, with this committeeman who, in turn, discusses it with the foreman. If he cannot get any satisfaction there, the Grievance Committeeman takes it up with the superintendent. If satisfaction or agreement is not reached there, then the matter is taken up by the national officers of the union, the staff representative in that district, with the plant manager. If that does not result in an agreement then the issue is taken up by the international officers of the union, at headquarters in Pittsburgh, with the executive officers of the company.

Generally we reach an agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached then the matter goes automatically to arbitration. There is an arbitrator appointed for every one of our contracts. In the biggest steel companies the arbitrator is always a full-time man. He gets these cases referred to him, thousands of them, and his decision is binding. Whatever he says both the union and management agree to accept in advance. It is this arbitration which prevents so many stoppages because every single

stoppage we have had has resulted in settlement, not directly--I am talking about stoppages in violation of a contract--by negotiation, but by reference to the arbitrator. Actually, the only thing gained by the stoppage is to satisfy the ego of the men involved.

Now getting back to the local union structure. These local unions send delegates to a convention. The convention is held every two years. The steelworkers are holding one next month. The delegates are elected at a special meeting of the local unions. Generally there are about 2,300 delegates at the convention.

The convention is the supreme governing body of the union. It establishes policy; it revises the constitution. It has its grassroots deep because every single delegate is somebody who works in a plant and is somebody who has been elected for that purpose, specifically, by his own local union. So they do the job of functioning for the union. They also legislate for the union. The resolutions they pass and the policies they establish are carried out by the international officers of the union.

We have four international officers, namely, president, secretary-treasurer and two vice presidents. The international officers are elected by referendum vote every two years. Anybody who is a member of a union can run for an international office. All he requires is nomination by local unions. We frequently have upsets. Naturally there should be some. The people in the unions are not always in full accord. Sometimes the membership changes its ideas about certain things. The way it shows those changes is to eliminate an officer. That is democracy.

In addition to that we have 39 districts of the steelworkers; each of these districts is under the direction of a district director. The district director is elected by referendum vote of the membership in that district, so he, too, is responsible to the membership.

The main purpose of this explanation is simply to point out that in the labor movement today you have a deep basis of democracy. You have complete responsibility to the membership who can change their officers with the greatest of ease. The United Automobile Workers just voted out their president and put another man in his place. Then they also voted out their vice presidents and put others in their places. They made a great many changes in their executive board.

Out of all this the important thing to remember is that labor unions today are responsible to the people who work in the plants. If the labor unions should do things that do not meet with universal approval, it is ordinarily because the people who work in the plants, the membership that want those things, want it done in that way.

The thing to do is not to try to convince the leader alone because he is, after all, only the representative of the rank and file. In most unions today they have rank-and-file control. You certainly will find it in the automobile workers, where it almost approaches anarchy. You also have it in the steelworkers, where it is much more disciplined. But you still have rank-and-file control in all unions.

There has been a great deal of talk going on about the manner in which unions operate. I have had distributed booklets which contain, among other things, a copy of The Economic Outlook, in which you will find an article entitled "Of, By and For the People". Now in this Economic Outlook you will notice on pages 4, 5, 6 and 7 two charts. One chart shows you how C.I.O. unions operate. It explains the responsibility to the membership; it tells how often conventions are held; what kind of an appeal system there is; what kind of elections, and so on.

On the following page is a chart showing the financial practices of the C.I.O. Unions. Every single C.I.O. Union is listed there, showing their dues. The initiation fee for every C.I.O. Union is also included in that listing. You will also note the average dues in a C.I.O. Union is approximately one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents a month. The average initiation fee in a C.I.O. Union is about three to five dollars. Now, in this connection, there are some few exceptions. There is one glaring exception, namely, the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association, which has a fifty dollar initiation fee. We are sorry about that. I might tell you the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association is a small group of highly-skilled men who believe they have some kind of special patent on their particular brand of engineering. They think it is an honor to be a member of that organization. Since their pay is high they naturally think they can afford to pay a good, stiff initiation fee, most of the money of which is used for insurance benefits. The C.I.O. does not approve of that in general. However, you will find all the other unions have very small fees.

I would like to say at this point that the C.I.O. does not believe in paying very high salaries to any of its officers. There are only two officers in C.I.O. Unions who get fifteen thousand, or more, dollars a year. One of them is Mr. Sidney Hillman, President of Amalgamated Clothing Workers; the other is Mr. Philip Murray, President of United Steelworkers. All the rest are too low, and some of them too damned low--including my own.

The C.I.O. Unions, as shown in that chart, make complete financial reports. Practically all of them issue certified public accountant audited financial reports to their membership. I would like to show you a copy of one of those reports. This (indicating) is a report for the steelworkers. In this report every single penny of income is accounted for; everything is shown. Every single penny of expenditure is shown. It is divided by departments in the unions, by officers, and by local unions. This report, which is made every six months, is more complete than that made by--I say this without reservation--any American company. There is not a single American company which makes a financial report anywhere near as complete as this one. Paper is still scarce, so I did not have enough copies to bring down with me to distribute among all of you.

Incidentally I might tell you the reports are always printed in sufficient numbers to permit one copy to be sent to every library in the country; one to be distributed to every member of Congress; and one to be distributed to every Executive Department. You see we make no secret about any of our funds. We make no secret about the money we have or the use to which it is put. I am going to leave several reports, one from 1943.

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one from 1942, and also the most recent one, with General Armstrong for use in your organization. I will see that additional copies are distributed as soon as they are made ready.

Other unions, the United Automobile Workers for instance, have the same kind of a financial report, the basic principle being that in this union, with some six million members, the membership has a right to know everything possible concerning its own union; and anything any member has the right to know about his union any American citizen, likewise, has a right to know.

We are a public institution. There were some times when we did not think we were one. There were times when we had to have a secret ritual. There were times when we had to meet in private and exclude any outsiders. That was done when management was attempting to fight the C.I.O. That is no longer true. It is not necessary for us to conceal any of our activities. We always welcome investigation. We welcome public interest in our activities. All of our reports, all our conventions, everything we do, is open to the public. They are invited--you people are invited--to participate at any time in any of our activities. We are holding a convention in Atlantic City--that is, the steelworkers--next month. Any representative of the Armed Forces, any individual who cares to come, is welcomed. He will find complete reports of union activities open to him, the same as they are to all the membership.

Now I would like to close by telling you something about how the C.I.O. has been operating these last few months during the period of strikes. We have had a great many strikes. We have had more people involved in strikes within the last few months than we had in the whole war. We had more people out for greater lengths of time. We were out simply because we thought we had something coming to us. We were willing and ready to fight for those things. The controls which we had voluntarily submitted to during the war were no longer necessary. It was now possible for all of us to assert ourselves, which we did.

Let me tell you how these steel strikes were called. First of all, there was a National Policy Committee meeting, held in the city of Pittsburgh, at which special representatives were elected from every local union. They all came down to Pittsburgh to talk this thing over. They decided they would ask for certain things in the revised contracts and, failing to get them, they would recommend to the membership that they go on strike for them.

Well, they failed to get them, so we petitioned the National Labor Relations Board to take a strike vote in all the steel companies to determine whether or not the membership desired a strike. This was all under provisions of the Smith-Connally Act. On November 28, some three months after we made our first demands, the National Labor Relations Board conducted a strike vote in all plants in which steel workers were employed. The vote showed that some 400,000 steel workers wanted to strike and some 80,000 steel workers did not want to strike. Well, of course, that is an overwhelming majority for a strike.

We then proceeded to notify the company that a strike would ensue unless we could reach an agreement. We could not reach an agreement. Therefore, we called another meeting of the special Policy Committee in the city of Pittsburgh. We met in Pittsburgh on 7 December 1945 and there decided, in view of the strike vote, we would go on strike on January 14 unless an agreement were reached prior to that time.

Now you hear some people talk about a cooling-off period. Our first demands were made in September, immediately following VJ-day, and the strike was not called until 14 January. Then it was delayed for one week. Actually we walked out on 21 January.

As I say, we could not reach an agreement. We could not reach an agreement because the people who operate the steel industry were not ready to grant wage increases. But that strike was not, in any way, intended to hurt management except to get the rise in wages. It was not intended to hurt any of those steel mills. It was intended simply to convince the people who were in control of the steel industry that if they wanted to produce more steel they would have to pay higher wages.

So we held meetings, I, personally, participated in some of those meetings. We had meetings with local management. We said, "Now we're going on a strike which is to be called on 14 January. We do not want to cause any trouble in your plant. We admit you must have certain services continued if you are going to have this plant resume operation after the strike is finally settled, if you're going to start right up again.

First, you will need some plant guards. We admit that. People are going to be idle, and since they have nothing to do they sometimes get a little hotheaded and might perhaps damage some property. That ought not be, we all know. So you are entitled to have men protect your property.

Second, you are entitled to have all of your supervisory force, all of your clerical force, and all the people who are not in the union and who are not engaged in the strike. Their services you must continue.

Third, you must have maintenance men to see that the equipment is protected and preserved; to insure that the water mains do not freeze; to keep the steam up to sufficient levels; to see that all the pipes and conduits in your plant, and all the other mechanisms, are in good working order.

You simply give us a complete list of all the men you need. Give us a list of the jobs they must perform. We will arrange to see that these men come in each morning and each night, in each shift, to do the job that has to be done to keep the plant in top operating order so that it is ready to go back into production just as soon as the strike is settled.

In 99 percent of the plants that was done. There were no difficulties at all. We gave special cards to each man who went through the picket lines to perform these jobs. The cards were issued not only for the purpose of making it much easier to go through without any difficulty but also to protect all those men, say, ten years from now. We have actually had experiences of this kind: The same kind of thing happened during the Little Steel strike of 1937. Men went into the plants to do maintenance work. Then, along in 1941, at a union meeting somebody stood up and said, "John Jones is a scab. He walked through the picket line in 1937". Now John Jones could not prove he had gone through the picket line with the instructions, advice and assistance of the union.

Now, as I say, we have these special cards. We also have a record in our national office of all the men who did these jobs and, instead of being considered a scab, they are considered men who made a special sacrifice, who went to work while others stayed out in order that the others could come back to work without delay.

The strike was settled, following which we reached 84 percent of production in less than one week, which is something of a record and which could not have been done unless you had the active cooperation of the union in doing the job.

The last few years, I think, have shown that management and labor can work together. They have learned a great deal about cooperation. I am happy to report that is true in most instances. The most glaring exception, I suppose, is in the automobile industry where apparently management is still living in the past. But, aside from that, we have discovered that management has some reasonable people and management has also found the unions have some reasonable people.

We have made certain exceptions to the rules simply because things had to be done. We had some strikes recently during the time the War Department needed certain materials that were in struck plants. One was at Allegheny Ludlum, in Dunkirk. General Groves called up Clinton Golden, Vice President of Steelworkers, and told him there were some materials in the Allegheny Ludlum plant that had to be taken out. They asked if we could possibly do something about getting them out. Why, of course, we could. Our people agreed and willingly cooperated in getting those materials out during the strike.

The same kind of thing was requested at the Worthington Pump plant at Harrison, where they had some material for streptomycin. A new streptomycin plant was built in Virginia, and certain pumps for this company were still in the Harrison plant of the Worthington Pump Company. We agreed with the War Department to get that material out. That was not scabbing. That is not breaking the picket line. The union was simply cooperating in a national need. The C.I.O. is willing to cooperate, in this way, wherever possible.

Cooperation is not always possible. Sometimes we cannot do anything. Sometimes local conditions forbid it. We could not do anything, for

instance, when the War Department asked our help in the case of Westinghouse. I might say the Westinghouse affair has degenerated into a cat-and-dog fight. There can be no cooperation at all until the strike is finally settled. We in the C.I.O. are sorry that in this case we can do nothing. We have done all we could to cooperate and will continue doing it as long as we remain the C.I.O.

Thank you.

GENERAL ARMSTRONG:

Thank you, Mr. Bernstein.

Mr. Bernstein, you spoke latterly about the variations between the C.I.O. Unions in their relationship to management. You speak also of the comparatively friendly relationships between the C.I.O. Steel Union, to which you belong, and the steel management.

Is there any prospect that the other C.I.O. Unions can develop a greater degree of cooperation within their own ranks so that we can look forward in the future to a better degree of responsibility and control within those unions? What do you think is the prospect?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

I, personally, think the prospect is a pretty good one. The C.I.O., after all, is still less than 10 years old. We still have not grown to maturity. Some of our unions, such as the steelworkers, have shown more promise than others. I do not know just how to ascribe responsibility for it, but the point is the steelworkers have done it.

I think the rubber workers are another example. There were no strikes in the rubber industry recently.

The clothing workers and the glass workers are other good examples.

Now I think the auto workers are advancing in recognition. They are a good deal further along than they were a few years ago. One of the main difficulties with the auto workers was that there was so much provocation from management. Let me read you something that management says about the union. This is what C.E. Wilson, President of General Motors Corporation had to say:

"Years before the war, the union leaders had three important planks in their platform: Number one, more money for less work."

Well, that was a rather crude way of putting it.

"Number two, freedom from discipline."

That, I think, is also crude.

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"Number three, a mud-slinging campaign directed at all executives, from the foreman on up, including a propaganda campaign that the bosses were all crooked and incompetent. The union leaders, by this Number three plank of their program, have so torn down respect for leadership that now they find that the rank and file of their unions don't like their own labor bosses any better than the labor bosses had taught them to consider the industrial bosses."

When the President of General Motors Corporation says that about the United Automobile Workers, it is not exactly conducive to harmonious relations.

Now when this comes out in print, Walter Reuther will feel constrained to answer it and Walter Reuther, being a much more clever man than Mr. Wilson, is able to turn a phrase more neatly, whereupon Mr. Wilson gets a little more antagonistic. Well, the final result is you get almost into the situation of the two Kilkenny cats.

If you have read any of the transcripts of negotiations between the U.A.W. and General Motors Corporation, you will have noticed they seem to be concerned not so much with convincing the other man but of getting the better of him in an argument. I must admit that when it comes to arguments, when it comes to debate, I have yet to see any industrial-management people who can hold a candle to the best people in labor.

I admit John L. Lewis, for instance, is without a doubt one of the greatest orators in the United States today. He is a ham actor and a good one. But that does not convince people. Mr. Murray, on the other hand, is a negotiator. He tries to understand. He does not try to make a fool of the other person. He tries, rather, to get the other man to come to his point of view.

The A.F.L. has the same type of men. But they, too, have some ham actors. And, unfortunately, labor leaders are mostly extroverts. They have to be. It is really a rough and tumble fight for existence. To get up on top in the local unions one must climb up on someone else's shoulders. He must always walk a chalk line. In the first place, he has to produce for the membership. In the second place, he has to feed the membership the right ideas. He has to show them that he is actually working.

Politics in labor unions are every bit as tumultuous as they are in the Government. We are beset by the same difficulties. We have the same kind of hacks in our organization that we have in Congress; the only point is that we are really more responsible. Everybody in a labor union can vote; whereas in the State of Mississippi only four percent of the people can vote. So, I do think we are necessarily a little bit better.

GENERAL ARMSTRONG:

I wanted to ask you if the unions could do anything to remedy what, it always seemed to me, caused the greatest fall in production in World War II, and that is absenteeism. Did the unions do anything to try to diminish the absenteeism of the workers? That certainly interfered because no one knew who was not going to show up for a certain day's work--he might be a key man--and the whole production line was hurt.

Do you believe, for instance, that more holidays would have been a better plan--for instance, getting off the Fourth of July and Labor Day? I always felt this insistence on getting one holiday a year was probably bad psychology for the workmen and resulted in less production because of increased absenteeism. What would be the union's attitude toward that?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

The unions, in general, felt as did industry about absenteeism. Some local unions even had systems of fines for workers who were unaccountably absent.

In this connection I think the War Department must accept some of the responsibility for the high degree of absenteeism. Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. I told you I was in Detroit for a while. The primary purpose of my being out there was to work with the labor branch. I went to the U.A.W. local union at Murray Corporation in Detroit where there had been a high absenteeism rate. I asked, "What can possibly be done about it?" Well, they immediately started cursing the War Department. This was their complaint:

The War Department had a major in the plant. This major told them they were responsible for the absenteeism and he was not going to permit it. He was going to have all kinds of dire penalties imposed upon them unless they corrected it.

The union had suggested to him certain ways of remedying absenteeism--suggestions which he completely ignored. Here were some of the suggestions:

The number of women employed by the Murray Corporation before the war was almost negligible. There were practically no women there at all. During the war it went up to 47 percent. Most of these women were wives or mothers or sisters of GI's. They worked on all shifts. They had kids to take care of at home. In addition to that, they had certain business with the War Department. They would get into difficulties over allotments. Or they would get notice that their son was missing or their husband was killed. Naturally they would all want some information. They suggested that if the War Department would have one person from the Detroit Headquarters (Service Command Headquarters) come down to the plant for, say, one morning a week and then permit a worker in the plant to drop in and see him and tell him their own individual problem, and ask him to do something about it, absenteeism would drop by 75 percent.

You see, the employees worked six days a week. The only way they could possibly get down to the Post Office Building was to take a day off from work. Almost every time they went to the Post Office Building they were told to come back the next day. So, you see, that was two days lost. Supposing it was Thursday or Friday and still they have not completed their business. Well, that means they must come back again on Saturday. They could not telephone because they worked during all the hours the War Department was open--the Navy Department too.

A little thing like that would have eliminated a large percentage of absenteeism. Yet there was no willingness on the part of the Army people in Detroit to do anything of the kind. All they could do was rave and rant and denounce the workers for not having put in full time on the job.

GENERAL ARMSTRONG:

Mr. Bernstein, very regretfully I have to leave the meeting. I shall now turn the meeting over to the Assistant Commandant, Colonel Brown. I wish to thank you very much for your contribution here this morning. I think the subject we have just been discussing can be discussed very profitably at further length at future meetings, if you will be good enough to come in and work with our Manpower Committee.

I suggest, Colonel Brown, as we were discussing it before we came in, you might now raise the question of Communism. It was Mr. Bernstein's idea.

Thank you very much.

COLONEL BROWN:

Mr. Bernstein, before we get on to the question of Communism, there is a question that has been going through my mind, if I can correctly phrase it, and that is this: Since 1944 the Army Industrial College has trained something like 4,500 officers and civilian employees of both the Army and the Navy and other government agencies to assist in the Reconversion Program of Industry. These 4,500 people have gone out into the field and trained others. All told, we think we have trained something like 30 thousand people to quickly assist manufacturers in reconverting industry to peacetime production.

We heard very much about full employment and the necessity for full employment. Having once gotten it, we had to keep unemployment away from the door. We also had to keep deflation away from the door in order to contribute to a healthy peacetime economy.

Now we, I think, were somewhat disappointed, after all these efforts, at the sporadic strikes which took place throughout the country, which seemed apparently to us to be impeding this concentrated effort. Do you think that these sporadic strikes, this epidemic of strikes which have recently taken place, is impeding a return to full employment and full peacetime production? Is organized labor not cutting off its nose to spite

its face? Would it not have been better to have had a high flow of production all over the United States and then built up a fight to increase wages? Would it not be better to get back into a period of prosperity, and know we were in a period of prosperity, and then negotiate with the manufacturer?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Oh, there is no question but that the strikes in the past few months have impeded reconversion.

I notice there are a number of naval officers here. Have you had any difficulty getting any white shirts?

A STUDENT:

There are none.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Was there any strike in any white-shirt factory that you know of?

A STUDENT:

We could get them during the war but we cannot get them now.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

But there have been no strikes in any shirt factory. It is not strikes alone that is responsible for the impeding of production. Yes, strikes are a contributing factor. The point is the C.I.O. feels the loss in production should be kept to a minimum; but if you are going to have full employment, you can have it only by maintaining the purchasing power. Purchasing power can be maintained only by seeing to it that American labor in the postwar period gets something like what they got in the war period.

With the end of the war and the end of overtime pay there was a drop of almost 30 percent in the take-home pay of most workers. There were some exceptions to that, but for the most part it was pretty close to 30 percent. Certainly it was like that in the steel industry.

In order to keep production up high we must have people able to buy the products that are being made. We can buy the stuff that is being made only if we get wages sufficiently high to pay for it, which means we must have a sufficiently high income. The C.I.O. felt that in order to do that it was necessary to establish the high income now that would be eventually established. We felt now was the time to do it. We understood the risks we were taking. We took them with full comprehension of the dangers. On the whole, I think it has been a successful effort. Steel production, for instance, is normal now, although this coal strike may cause it to be reduced. But the coal strike takes place every year. Your steel production is now back to somewhere around 90 percent, which is higher than it was in 1929.

The materials are being made. Why they are not being distributed in the manner we think they should be, I do not know. I can say I think some of the responsibility for it is that these things have been withheld in the hope there would be an increase in prices; that O.P.A. would be eliminated. If the Congress would pass the extension of the O.P.A. law and make it possible for management to say, "Well, we know we are not going to get a price increase, so we might as well put the stuff on the market", I think we would then get a great deal more material.

I spoke specifically of white shirts because they are ready to be made, or have been made.

In the long run, even in the short run (over the next few months), the chance of getting the wage question settled for the Reconversion Period is good. There will be no more strikes in the steel industry and very few in the other industries once the coal strike is finally settled. But the coal strike comes along every time a contract expires.

A STUDENT:

Within the past month there was on that same platform a member of the management group. He made a statement which, if I recall correctly, went something like this: In my 30-odd years of experience it has been my conclusion that labor gives as little as it can, in the way of effort, for the pay it receives.

My question is: Is there any school of thought or policy in organized labor that makes that statement justified? Or is the policy of organized labor neutral on that point? Or does organized labor pursue the policy of trying to make the worker give everything he possibly can in the way of effort--everything practicable--for the pay he receives?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

In the early days of the steel industry, for instance, the profits to management more than exceeded the wages to labor. The workingman knew that the more he produced the more profits he was making for somebody else, and the less he did the smaller the profit to somebody else without any loss to his own income. There was actually such a philosophy.

At present, union men realize we are working not for the medium of exchange, the paper money we get, but for the things that paper money can buy. We are all working for production. We are working not to get so many dollars per week, but so many loaves of bread, so much milk, so much housing, so much clothing. All of this--loaves of bread, housing, milk, clothing--comes from production. That is, we understand if we get a wage increase we must work for it. We can not simply say, "The cost of this will come out of management's profits". Management profits are not enough at present to do that. It is production that does the thing. It is more efficient operation.

So, in the United Steelworkers of America we have a Production Engineering Department. The purpose of this Production Engineering Department is to arrange for union-management cooperation, which will increase efficiency

and reduce costs. This makes it possible for the company to pay higher wages to its employees. That is really the only source of higher wages; in fact, it is the only source of wages.

This Production Engineering Department goes into a plant with the industrial engineers. We take time studies; make job evaluations and cost analyses. We consider all the difficulties involved. We have meetings with the men. We tell them, "Now look, if you want to keep your jobs here and if you want to get a wage increase you have to make it profitable for the company to pay that wage increase; the wage increase will be paid only if you earn it".

We all know there is a lot of gold-bricking going on which is not necessarily intentional. It is just bad management on the part of both the workers and the people who are hired to manage. For example, there was one company, the Empire Sheet and Tin-Plate Company in Mansfield which was on the rocks. They were going into bankruptcy. Well, one reason they were going into bankruptcy was not that they did not have modern machinery but, more important, they were making a great deal of scrap. Their sheets were being turned down. They were not producing enough good material and they could not understand why.

Individually, the workers could not tell them why, but when we called together management and the workers' representatives from each department--the open hearth, the blooming mill, the rolling mills, and so on down the line--and discussed each point in production and got the workers' confidence things began to clear up. Ordinarily, when a man with a stop-watch comes into a plant and stands near a worker, the worker does one of two things: Either he tries to befuddle the man with the stop-watch by doing other things as well, or he goes on a slow-down. Naturally, because in the past when that kind of thing happened increased production was established with lower rates of pay. They were trying to get the last ounce of energy out of the worker without paying for it. Management understands now that this can not be done; that you must get the workers' confidence.

So you manage to get the men together. Instead of having engineers coming in with a stop-watch, the company takes men out of the plant, ordinary workers who show an aptitude for this sort of thing, and trains them to do the job. These men, in turn, work along with the engineers. They might completely revise the production setup. That has been done during the war. That is the kind of thing the U.S. Steel Corporation was referring to when it said 5,000 production records had been broken. Those records have been broken simply because the union and management sat down together in a wholehearted effort to break them. We could have broken a great deal more--and we will break a great many more--with more understanding cooperation between the two.

So I think the man who spoke here before from management was a representative of the old school. But for every executive of that type I could bring you 25 of the new type, men who, 10 years ago, were willing to use any means, including mayhem, to get rid of the Union, but who today--oh, well, we are the best of friends.

CAPTAIN HENNING:

Would you comment on the labor control institute that was in existence during World War II, the war labor organization, and give us your views concerning any industrial plan in the future as to what improvements you feel might be introduced.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

During the war we established machinery for settling disputes. The disputes were the kind that arose under the contracts and generally they involved the negotiation of contracts. Labor had agreed not to go on strike; that is, the Labor Unions had so agreed. There had to be some method of settling differences. The method was the War Labor Board. The chief fault of the War Labor Board was that it was much too slow. It was ungodly slow. It took months, and months, and months to get cases settled. As a matter of fact, there were many strikes called against the delay in the War Labor Board.

I would suggest that if we get into another war, we ought to have something similar because if we are going to have a sacrifice on one side we must have some appeals, some method of settling questions without a strike. Therefore, there should be some kind of machinery set up for settling differences. But that machinery ought to take into account the human factor; that if a problem arises, the problem should be settled in the shortest possible time so that the men would understand that at least they are getting consideration; that they are not being unduly delayed; they are not being intentionally stalled. While the problem is being solved they ought to have some sort of a system which would convince management they are getting a fair deal out of it.

It would be better to have a board that functions before the fact rather than afterwards.

In the course of negotiation, if the War Labor Board could be informed of the discussions and the points which are likely to cause disputes and lack of agreement, some system ought to be devised whereby the War Labor Board, or its equivalent, could be ready to step into the breach and get the thing settled quickly. In peacetime, of course, that is unnecessary.

A STUDENT:

At the present time there is plenty of production and plenty of manufacturing going on to take care of the number of people who want jobs. However, in the past and probably in the future there will be times when there will be some unemployment. Under those conditions what is the policy of the C.I.O. in regard to technological developments or labor-saving devices, which will have a tendency to reduce employment if their use were introduced in the various plants?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

The C.I.O. understands you must have progress; that we have a high standard of living here simply because we are more progressive than they are in other countries.

We understand, too, that at the point of immediate impact there may be, probably will be in most cases, unemployment resulting from the introduction of new machinery. We have had a great deal of that difficulty in the steel industry where the continuous strip mills employing a few hundred men would displace thousands of men in the old hand mills. To continue the strip mills makes possible the production of a great deal more steel because turret tops for automobiles can be made; better refrigerators can be made; there would be a thousand uses for steel which would not be possible under the old roller and catcher back-and-forth method.

As a result we in the C.I.O. feel technological change is a good thing. We are establishing in the plants committees which will consider the introduction of new machinery to insure that it will be put in at a time when it will cause a minimum of displacement. If it is put in at the present time, for instance, when there is plenty of work, when everybody who wants a job has one, it should be so arranged that the loss of time to individual workers will be limited.

Further, the company and the unions will have to work out a program for taking care of these displaced workers. If, for instance, you should put in a new open hearth which has a 250-ton capacity as compared with the old ones which have only a 130-ton capacity, you will have fewer open hearths and there will be fewer men.

There are some slagers and melters who will not have any more work to do. Well, they might have been employed by the company for, say, 20 years. You do not want to turn them out on the street. On the other hand, you do not want to give them a laborer's job. So, while we are putting in this new machinery we should go over the plant's employment records to find out where we can fit these men in. What other jobs are there for them? How can we take care of them? In most instances that sort of thing works.

I am quite sure you will not find any responsible official of the C.I.O. objecting to the introduction of new machinery. We all understand that it is only by the constant improvement, constant shortening of the manual effort required for work, that we, in the long run, can secure a higher standard of living and better working conditions. If there is more machinery, which naturally makes it necessary to employ fewer men, then eventually the time can go down from an eight-hour day to a six-hour day which, we think, is a pretty good thing. If more can be produced, with more efficient methods, then it will be possible for Management to pay the same rates for six hours that are now paid for eight hours. But unless things like that are done, unless better machinery and more efficient equipment are obtained and there are better ways of doing things, we will never be able to improve on working conditions.

Therefore, we are all for technological improvements and will cooperate to the fullest in introducing them.

COLONEL NEIS:

What steps can be taken to reduce or eliminate jurisdictional strikes? Would you care to mention that?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Jurisdictional strikes are the most inexcusable part of labor relations. They are a sign of immaturity.

There are a number of things that can be done. In the first place, within the unions, within C.I.O., there are practically no jurisdictional fights. There are some squabbles but usually they do not break out in the open because we have committees established with full power to settle them.

Within the A.F.L. you have the same kind of committees but unfortunately they are not so effective as they are in the C.I.O., the reason being there are many more A.F.L. trade unions than there are C.I.O. industrial unions. For example, you will get the woodworkers and the metalworkers fighting with one another as to who is to do the job of laying wood on metal. The brewery workers and machinists were in a recent fight over who is to do certain work inside a brewery factory. The brewers finally got out of the A.F.L. and became independent--as they are now. The machinists then got into a fight with another organization and they got out of A.F.L. So they are independent now.

You see, it is one of those things that is going to take a lot of time and a lot of understanding to correct. Mr. Murray has suggested that the C.I.O. and A.F.L. establish a joint committee for settling disputes between the two organizations. I am all in favor of that.

If I might continue on for one moment longer, I would like to say in the C.I.O. we try to recognize some sort of intelligent lines of demarcation. I was in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, in 1936. We organized the people who worked for the National Electric Products Company, which was an electrical company in the steel community. The other plant across the street was a steel plant. When we organized the other plant, the workers of the Electric Company wanted to join also, so we took them in. Later on we turned our membership cards over to the United Electrical Workers and said, "This contract is going to the electrical workers and not the steel workers". The people who worked in National Electric Products did not like that. The final result was the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which is an A.F.L. union, came in and took the whole thing over.

A STUDENT:

There are a lot of average Americans in this country and a small percentage of those are in the unions. Although all the arguments that have been put forth in defense of the union are very sound, nevertheless there are equally sound arguments on the other side of the fence.

The average American is more influenced by little things, little annoying things, than by sitting as a judge between one side and the other.

For example, the other week an instance came to my attention where it took six men, right in this building, to put a telephone on one desk. It took an electrician, with an assistant of course, to run about 20 feet of wire to the desk. It took a carpenter, plus an assistant of course, to drill one little hole so the electrician could put the wire in. Then another man, along with his assistant, had to come along and hook up the telephone. That actually happened.

Now the average American is going to get fed up on somebody. I am wondering whether the unions have an agency of some sort on topside somewhere to keep an ear to the ground to see that someone does not come along with a little pin and burst their balloon.

MR. BERNSTEIN:

The thing you mentioned, Colonel, is something quite true. It represents a fear complex on the part of those workers. They are craft workers. One perhaps belongs to the I.B.E.W., International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; another one belongs to the Machinists Union; another, the Carpenters' Union, and so on.

That kind of thing is most unfortunate and most inefficient. It is responsible for many of the difficulties we are having in the housing shortage. We ought to have some way to help people understand that it is the job to be done that is important and not the fact that one or another man does it.

In industry they do not have anything like that. A millwright in industry does the job. If it is necessary to rewire an electric motor, he will do that. If he has to drill a hole to put the electric motor in, he will do that too. If he has to make a little box for it, he will use a hammer and some nails and work the wood.

We have not reached that stage in some of the old-line unions, which were based on the craft differential in the past. The reason people always insist on these practices is that they know they ordinarily can only work a certain number of months a year; the rest of the time they are out of a job. As a result, they are very jealous about keeping all the work they possible can. They are willing, under certain circumstances, to sacrifice the job that has to be done during a period of stringency in order to prevent other people coming in, which will affect their own opportunities for work during periods of curtailed operations.

We are not doing as much as we should about that. In the C.I.O. we seldom face that problem. In some places we do, but in most places we do not.

Now in the A.F.L. they do have that problem. There are the carpenters organized in one union; the electrical workers in another; the machinists in a third, and so on down the line. Each is jealous of its own jurisdiction. You are going to find it very, very difficult to arrange for its improvement. It will take time; it will take patience and it will also take a great deal of understanding, which we do not have now.

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I am sorry to admit we have not done as good a job on that question as we should. When Mr. Green comes here he will be able to tell you more about what his policies are. We do not have this problem so we can not do anything. We cannot prescribe Mr. Green his duties any more than we would appreciate his prescribing us our duties.

Something was said about Communism. I am greatly interested in the subject because we have been accused of being communists--at least a lot of labor people have been accused of being communists.

I think it is important for you who are in the Armed Forces to understand what the philosophy of the labor movement is. The C.I.O., and the A.F.L. too, have a base consisting of some 13 million workers. Those 13 million people are not communists. Most of them do not even know what the word actually means. Certainly they do not know the difference between a Stalinite, a Browderite, a Trotskyite; what the Socialist Labor Party is, and so on. They simply do not understand it. They do not want any part of it.

These people all believe in pure and simple trade unionism. The policy of the C.I.O. and the A.F.L. is pure and simple trade unionism. We have a job to do. We have a responsibility to our membership. We have to negotiate contracts which give to our membership certain benefits, certain rights and protections. The settlement of the difficulties in Indonesia, or Iran, or Turkestan, or India, have nothing whatever to do with the problem of increasing wages or improving working conditions. Our job is principally one of simple trade unionism.

I illustrated a few moments ago the manner in which the C.I.O., and the A.F.L. too, elect their officers. Any man who can persuade a group of other men that he is a likely candidate for an office can become elected to that office. Among those men there have been people whose ideology stemmed not from a respect or appreciation of the United States and its institutions, but from something coming outside. Now I do not say that anything outside is necessarily bad. Many things from outside are good; very good. Much of the atomic bomb theoretical research came from other countries.

I think the extent of the infiltration of this outside group has been grossly exaggerated. Anybody who stands for certain things which may parallel the stand of the Communist Party is not necessarily a believer in the Communist Party. For example, I stand for wage increases. The Daily Worker also wants wage increases. It has backed the strikes of the steel workers. That does not make me or any of my associates communists because we stand for other things that the Daily Worker, which is the official organ of the Communist Party, stands for. We have no association with them.

I am happy to report that in the steel industry, in the United Steelworkers Union, there are very few communists, or people who follow the Communist lines, which amounts to almost the same thing. I consider myself a pretty good expert on detecting people who follow the line, or who are communists. You cannot define it. One cannot say these are the criteria, or anything like that. It is necessary to have had experience with those

people. I have seen these people and I am happy to report that in the steel industry there are none of which to speak.

Certain of our members--and you can always tell those--will send in resolutions asking us to do something about Indonesia. They will send in resolutions about getting the U. S. Army out of China. The C.I.O. has been for demobilization at the quickest possible rate consistent with our international commitments. I will repeat: We get resolutions in from certain people asking us to support them in their demand that we take the Army out of Manchuria; that we get the Army out of Japan and out of a lot of other places. Well, we know what starts that sort of thing. You cannot show anything the C.I.O. has done in any way which supports a program of the Communists, or any other group, which is inconsistent with the program of a strictly American patriotic endeavor.

You will not find, in anything the C.I.O. has done, any attempt made to undermine the Army for political purposes. We think there are too many men in the Army. We think, too, many of our people (someone and one-half million of them) who have gone into the Armed Services ought to come back home. We think they are there unnecessarily, in certain places; but we have never made the political approach towards it and will not because, as I have indicated again and again this morning, we are a Labor Union and we are interested in things which do not affect Labor Unions and their membership.

There are certain people of questionable loyalties who sometimes come to positions of importance in the C.I.O. The Army does too. Let me tell you of an example. A friend of mine, a Greek, someone I knew in college who was at that time a communist and still is, came to the United States and went to Cornell University as an exchange student. He stayed here. After receiving his degree he was drafted into the Army. Somehow or other that man got into the Office of Strategic Services, became an officer and was sent, of all places, to Greece.

Well, on the surface of it, it looks pretty good: Here is a Greek himself, who knows Greece, speaks Greek fluently--naturally; that is his native language--and is sent back to do secret work in Greece.

Well, I happen to know what he did. He made no secret of it to me. He went there propagandizing and organizing the E.A.M. for the U. S. Army. He was working, not for America, but for the communists. Now he has been discharged from the Army and he is writing a book denouncing the British for what they are doing in Greece and also the United States for what it has done and is doing. He is criticizing and finding fault with the activities of O.S.S. All that sort of thing he puts into his book, but he does not dare tell how he had been working with someone else when he should not have been. The Army does not know about that. You see, it did not have a background knowledge of every single man in its organization. It could not have. Nor can we have knowledge and understanding of everybody in our organization.

When we discover a situation like this--for example, the United Automobile Workers has as a delegate to its national conventions a man by the name of Nat Ganley. Now Nat Ganley is a member of the Executive Board of the Communist Party. He is elected to office. Everybody knows he is a communist, yet he is a good trade unionist; or at least on all matters which affect trade unionism he is good. He is very effective. So he is elected to this office and he goes down to the conventions representing his local union. He also represents people who did not elect him.

I really think the thing we must do and the thing I am doing and the thing my associates are doing is, when we discover that kind of thing we tell the local unions, "Look, we are reaching a stage now where there may be a difference between the objectives of pure and simple trade unionism and the objectives of people who are representing the Communist Party. We want you to understand you have the right to elect anybody you want to, but if you elect such a man you may very well elect someone who will sacrifice your interest for the interest of the Communist Party." If they want to elect them to office, then there is nothing we can do.

The City of Boston just elected a mayor who is going to act from jail. He has been convicted of a number of crimes, and yet the people of Boston elected him to office. I imagine he will have secretaries in his cell who will take dictation and do whatever else has to be done toward administering the great office of Mayor of Boston. Well, if the people of Boston want to elect a convicted crook, it is their business. I do not know whether we can stop them. If I were a Bostonian, I would try to get the people not to elect such a man because if he is a crook in some respects certainly he is bound to be a crook in others. So, personally, I would not trust him.

If, in certain instances, we have some people that will vote for people like that, there is nothing we can possibly do to stop them. They have a right to elect anybody they want.

I might also say some of our local union officers are followers of Father Coughlin, for instance. We have some people who are Fascists who have been elected to office. There are some 19,000 officers in the steelworkers' 1800 local unions. If you have 19,000 people you are going to have a lot of them who do not quite agree with the general principles. I imagine if you look into the Army and the Navy you would find all kinds of queer ducks too. We cannot go to the local union level and have them thrown out. We have to go to the top and then maybe it does not always work.

The thing I want to emphasize is that the C.I.O. and the A.F.L. are trade unions, with the interests of their unions at heart and not any political ideology.

So far as cooperation with Russia is concerned I would like to say anything Russia wants is okay with us--in Russia! If they like their form of communism, fine; they can have it. But we do not want it here.

I think a good illustration in this connection is that there were 48,000 votes for the communists in the last election. That is not a very frightening number. We do not have enough communists in America to worry about, provided we keep our senses about them.

We oppose communists simply because they are communists and not that we oppose anyone who is accused of being a communist. Why, Mr. Rankin, the Chairman of the House Veterans' Committee, accuses most of the President's cabinet of being communists. He accuses many Army officers of being communists. He also accuses many Governors of being communists. Well, when that kind of thing is permitted we are doing the best possible favor to the communists. By indiscriminately tagging anybody you do not like with the label "Communist", you are getting people to say, "We've got to protect everybody". Communists are really permitted to get behind the skirts of the people who are actually fundamental Democrats,--I mean people who believe in Democracy--just as we in the labor movement have made mistakes by calling the people whom we do not like "reactionaries" or "Fascists". The whole thing is simply stupid. I do not know more than three or four "Fascists" in American management. I do not think there are many more than that. But there are many of my associates who call anybody who resists wage increases a "Fascist". Well, I think that is stupid. Most of us do not agree with that.

COLONEL BROWN:

I would like to get in just one more question and that is this: I suppose that trade unionism, particularly the C.I.O., concedes that any nation such as ours, under present circumstances, has to have an industrial mobilization plan. We ought to have an industrial mobilization plan on tap at all times. We do not want that mobilization plan to be regarded as the mobilization plan of the Army and the Navy. We want that mobilization plan to be the mobilization plan of the United States.

The question occurs to us have you any suggestions as to how the C.I.O. can participate in drafting a mobilization plan and feeling that that industrial mobilization plan is as much a C.I.O. industrial mobilization plan as it is of the Army and Navy?

MR. BERNSTEIN:

Yes. In the first place, I want to say the C.I.O. does not regard an industrial mobilization plan as a scheme to bring us into war. We understand that in the present international setup we may become involved in war. We understand further that if we become involved in war then there is only one consideration, namely, winning the war.

We just had an Executive Board meeting of the steelworkers a couple days ago, in which Mr. Murray, the President of both the C.I.O. and the steelworkers, talked about this very thing. He said his policy was guided by the statement of Steven Decatur some 150 years ago, the one about our country might not always be in the right, but right or wrong it is our country. The C.I.O. definitely takes that stand.

All right. What are you going to do about it? Some sort of systems must be established whereby we can mobilize more quickly than we did the last time. We have all learned a lot. In the first place we have learned we have to shift workers from one place to another because the jobs that are done in peacetime are not always the same jobs done in time of war. There ought to be some kind of system devised whereby people can be shifted, with the cooperation of both management and labor, from one job to another so that they keep their seniority in their old job and will be able to come back. We have done that in this war only to a limited extent, but it has been done and it has proved very useful.

There are some other things we ought to do. We understand that now more attention must be paid to the needs of the individual worker; that is, they must be told what is going on. You cannot tell them everything. For example, you could not have told them we were making an atomic bomb, and that is why we had to break all production records in building the Oak Ridge plant. But you can simply tell them, "Here is something that has to be done. This is why it has to be done" without in any way giving away any military secrets.

On the other hand, you have to demonstrate it physically as well as by word of mouth. That is, tell them, "You will have to make so many airplanes; so many wings". Just to have these wing sections setting around in storage for days and days and weeks and months does not make sense. That was true in the Murray Company. They were making some wings for the P-47. They were told they had to increase their production. They did increase their production and then the increased production simply was put in the yard. Now it might be advisable to point out to the workers that the reason this was put out in the yard was that somebody else in another plant had not gone ahead and we were waiting for a new plant to be put into operation; or perhaps there was some other reason. But the workers ought to be taken into the confidence of both management and the Armed Forces.

The Unions ought to be fully informed of what your needs are. The needs ought to be spelled out. They ought to be listed point by point. Officials of the unions, people who have been trusted (if this is a confidential matter) ought to be informed step by step so that they in turn could prepare a sort of schedule and let their people know it is necessary to do this job.

I think the chief difficulty during the whole war period was trying to get things done by order, by decrees, somebody coming into a plant and saying, "Beginning tomorrow morning we are going to do thus and so". The same thing could be done much more easily, with a minimum of interference and resentment, if management and labor were called in and told, "Now this is what we are going to have to do. What do you propose for doing it?" I am sure you would find on the part of labor people who have, first, the ability to make concrete and constructive suggestions; and, second, people who want to cooperate fully and wholeheartedly.

Now I would like to say this about our Armed Forces. We have had our brushes with them. We have had our problems with Army officers. We have had difficulties with the Navy officers. But, in general, the policies of the War Department and the Navy Department have been such as to inspire among labor people a confidence that never existed before. We have been able to establish liaison with Army officers that we never dreamed possible before the war. We have found that if we bring the problem to the Army or Navy we, generally, can get an answer, a reasonable answer. In general we have discovered that Army and Navy people are pretty reasonable; they usually have some regard for the job which a union has to do. I think the statement of Colonel Furthy to the Congress on the subject of strikes in which he said that the policy of the War Department is not to interfere with or to give encouragement to either side has done a tremendous amount of good in establishing a feeling of respect among the labor people for the Army and the Navy.

So far as I am concerned, my office will always work as closely as possible with you for any legitimate reason which may come up. There are times when we object to certain things about the Army and Navy, naturally. We are taking a very active part in this Army investigation of caste system. We all feel very strongly about that. We also feel strongly about demobilization. But in each instance the things which we are doing are directed, not against anybody, not to harm the Army or the Navy, but to establish some degree of civilian responsibility; some degree of democracy.

Now so far as demobilization is concerned, we have never taken a stand that the Army must pull in its horns and give up the job of occupying enemy countries to anybody else.

COLONEL BROWN:

This labor problem has always been a highlight in the Army Industrial College. There has always been more interest in the labor problem here in the Industrial College since I have known it than probably in any other problem.

We could continue this discussion interminably if you could hold out, but I do not think it is fair for us to expect you to hold out much longer.

I would like to say, on behalf of the class and on behalf of the Commandant, I certainly wish to thank you for the energy and the ability and the acumen with which you have presented the policies of the C.I.O. here this morning. I am sure the class joins with me in extending to you our thanks.

In that connection, I predict if you keep up your splendid batting average by the time we get to our next industrial mobilization you will be occupying the place Mr. Hillman now occupies and we may have very effective liaison with you.

Thank you very much.

(29 April 1946--200.)S

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