

**ROLE AND PROBLEMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
IN AN ATOMIC WAR**

18 May 1954

1837

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**INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES**

Washington, D. C.

Honorable Rocco C. Siciliano, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Manpower, was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, 4 March 1922. He was graduated with honors in 1944, receiving an A. B. degree at the University of Utah. At the conclusion of study during the period 1946-48 he received an LL. B. at Georgetown University Law School. During the period 1943-46 he served as a first lieutenant in the Army. His business and professional experience includes: State Occupational Analyst, U. S. Employment Service, Department of Labor, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1946 (summer); legal assistant to board member, National Labor Relations Board, Washington, D. C., 1948-50; and assistant secretary and treasurer, and supervisor of labor relations, Procon Incorporated, Headquarters, Des Plaines, Illinois, 1950-53. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, American Bar Association, and the Bar Association of the District of Columbia. Mr. Siciliano was nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate as Assistant Secretary of Labor in July 1953. This is his first lecture at the Industrial College.

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COLONEL BARTLETT: General Greeley and students: The lecture this morning brings to you a discussion of the "Role and Problems of the Department of Labor in Atomic War."

Our speaker is the Honorable Rocco Siciliano, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Manpower. He is aware of the scope of the study on which you are now engaged. He agrees with us as to its importance and the need for effective plans to cope with it. He has agreed to give you this morning the benefit of his own thinking as to the Labor Department's responsibilities concerning it.

I am sure you have noted from Mr. Siciliano's biographical sketch the impressive fact that at the time of his appointment to the subcabinet he was only 31 years old. We congratulate you on this unusual achievement. It is an honor, sir, and a privilege to welcome you here and to present you to this audience.

MR. SICILIANO: Thank you very much. General Greeley, gentlemen: I am very happy to have the opportunity to talk to you. I think it is a real privilege for me to meet with you this morning to try to think through some of the problems which would be thrust upon our economy, our society, and our culture by the onset of atomic war. Those of you who have laid out this problem, the directive under which you are working at the present time, are contributing not only to your own, but to the whole Government's better understanding of the world we live in and of the world we could find ourselves in any morning following the projected assumed attack.

The problem forces us to face the ugly facts of an atomic war, to try to anticipate what would happen thereafter, and to find solutions to that problem. Our whole defense posture is going to be strengthened by the work that you are doing.

I might as well state frankly at the outset that I do not have any pat answers to the problems with which you are wrestling. If we can this morning sharpen up the questions that need to be asked, I think that would be contribution enough.

You are breaking new ground in conjecturing on the kinds of problems that would ensue in another war, particularly as they would affect our country directly. To the best of my knowledge, no one has set down in sequence and in detail the kinds of decisions that would have to be made, let alone come up with the answers to the questions.

As has been indicated, my particular job happens to concern itself with employment and manpower. It is an all-embracing term, and a little bit threatening, in a sense, because actually it is not a one-man job; the whole of Government is concerned with employment and manpower. However, my particular duties, among others, are to direct and coordinate the Department's manpower plans and programs so that they might be carried out to meet the Nation's defense requirements in a time of full mobilization and in a time of partial mobilization. With the collaboration of labor and management there has been completed a framework for the mobilization and distribution of our manpower resources in time of emergency, which we think is pretty sound.

I would like to say just a word about our work with labor and management in the development of our manpower programs. I think you are familiar with some of this from past talks, but at this particular moment, inasmuch as it directly concerns the Department of Labor, it can stand repeating.

Since Korea we have--when I say "we" of course I mean the Department of Labor--together with the ODM, been cochairmen of the national Labor-Management Manpower Policy Committee. There is a related committee that is made up of only Government people, which also has part of the same title of this national labor-management group. It is simply called the Manpower Policy Committee. This national labor-management group is made up of labor and management representatives from all of the principal trade associations and all of the major labor organizations in the country.

The national Committee has counterparts at regional and at local levels. They are set up at present on a continuing basis so that on very short notice the support and active thinking of labor and management can be enlisted on ways and means for solving our manpower problems. Of course the manpower job in the last analysis has to be done at the local level where people live and where the jobs are to be filled.

A nucleus, then, does exist, a nucleus of labor-management manpower policy committees, in important labor-market areas. That is being maintained at present. It is made up, as I say, of local people who are representative of labor and management interests.

Each of the Labor Department's regional offices has available to it a continuing labor-management manpower policy committee to advise on the solution of manpower problems as they might emerge. If I may just repeat--we have the local committees. Then we have the regional labor-management manpower committees. Then of course, we have our National Committee.

The National Labor-Management Manpower Committee has just completed about 18 months of intensive work on a document which is called a "Manpower Program for Full Mobilization." I think last fall a speaker, in talking to you when you were taking up the manpower programs, mentioned this particular study to you. Perhaps it was again referred to last week. In any event, this study, which has been finished finally, represents, not a compromise--because we were not able to get a compromise in working out this thing--but it represents uniform thinking on the part of the labor and management group and is now in final form. It was submitted to Dr. Flemming about two weeks ago.

It has tried to anticipate all the kinds of problems which would be encountered--of identifying the jobs that would need filling; of recruiting workers for the jobs and for the Armed Forces; of training workers; and of insuring that the labor force has a chance to participate at the highest level of productivity in winning the war.

That manpower program is based on the belief that the people, properly informed as to the nature of a war emergency, would make of their volition the employment choices that would best advance the winning of the war. I recognize that this is probably the crux of most of the questions that might come, and it certainly is the crux of the problem as they dealt with it. It is a question of voluntary as against directed manpower decisions.

In manpower mobilization planning two principles govern us in the work we do.

One is that mobilization planning is indivisible. I am told that the motto of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces is "Industry and

Defense are Inseparable." That is the principle that mobilization must follow. It is suicide to plan for a piece of a war. Planning for materials, manpower, manufacturing capacity, stabilization, rationing, communications, transportation, and so on, must be as perfectly integrated as we can make it. We cannot have a successful manpower program developed independently of the production program, any more than we can have successful production plans developed independently of a system for rationing materials necessary for the production. All aspects, then, need to be viewed for this total in relationship to one another.

The second rule that we follow is that manpower requirements are always generated by and reflect production decisions. There is no such thing as a manpower requirement in vacuo--manpower is required to carry out a decision to produce goods and services. The Armed Forces require men, not for their own sake, of course, but to carry out strategic and tactical decisions. The only war manpower program that makes sense is one that undertakes to help carry out production decisions and military operations.

Thus, we must anticipate and understand our production responsibility and our military operations if we are to develop manpower programs and make them feasible. I think for emphasis I will just repeat this idea that we don't isolate a manpower program as such and try to deal with it; we can't. My remarks here are not going to be confined strictly to the manpower aspects; it is impossible.

It may prove to be that in the premises of the total problem before you the manpower problem is not of first priority. The problem of maintaining our society itself in a form resembling what we have known and want to continue far transcends this problem of matching men and jobs.

You are called upon to come up with solutions, not for manpower problems, but for the problems of man. So let's make sure we are talking about the same set of considerations. We are assuming--I am using your assumptions--that in the early hours of some morning, perhaps tomorrow morning, Soviet planes--or whatever methods they might use--bearing atomic weapons will successfully fire those weapons simultaneously over 20 of the major cities in the United States. The

weapons would be of 50,000 tons' destructiveness, which is about 2.5 times the bomb used at Hiroshima, and the results, in terms of casualties to the population, would average nearly 27 percent in the 20 cities' populations. There would be 4.25 million dead and 2.75 million seriously wounded people.

Without quibbling over the assumptions, it might be that 50 K-T bombs are probably modest weapons, and the number of cities, or even the selection of the cities, might be substantially different, to our detriment. But the nature of the problem would not change markedly even though the number and weight of the weapons were increased.

You are then to reckon with at least seven aspects of the effects of the attack:

1. Loss of manpower.
2. Damage to productive facilities and production potential.
3. Disruption to services of all kinds.
4. Disruption to Federal Government functioning.
5. Psychological effects.
6. Effect on standard of living.
7. Time and productive resources required for satisfactory restoration.

I would say that all of these seven aspects again have a bearing each one on the other. I won't attempt to take them in order because of that interrelationship.

With respect to the loss of manpower, however, I suggest that the labor-market situation which will follow such an attack might very well be one of a manpower surplus. This I don't think is an original thought,

but it certainly counteracts what most people are saying about the shortage of manpower after such an attack.

The casualties calculated are of persons sleeping at the time of the attack within the vulnerable radius of ground zero. In many cities I think probably far more work places will be destroyed than workers for the jobs in those places. That is probably the reason we might have a surplus.

I find it difficult to reckon with the Nation as a whole or even with 20 cities at a time. Let's take Washington, which we all know and live in. Here, the percentage of casualties is much higher--it is 61.8. That is what you estimated in your assumption. But as you know, this is the population of only the city proper. I think the figures that you are using for Washington are something like 802,000. The work places that would be destroyed are those filled by people who live throughout the metropolitan area. Some of them, and some of you, may commute as far as Falls Church or Kensington. Your work places would disappear--your chance for immediate employment at useful work in winning the war would disappear for the time being, but your demand for food and shelter and heat and light for yourselves and your families would continue. There are about 1.25 million people in this area. That morning some of us could awaken alive and whole and find vast unemployment with greatly reduced opportunity for work of the kind that has gone on in each of these cities.

The manpower problem immediately could be one of cuts in production and employment not only in the blasted cities but in every city of consequence in the country, to the extent that it supplies goods to or gets goods from the 20 bombed cities.

I choose Washington as an example because we live here and know the city. Other cities would be as badly off, or worse off, in terms of losing more work places than workers. Look at New York City--according to your assumptions only 19 percent of the city's population would be casualties, but I think we can fairly well assume that little work could be done in the entire harbor area. Perhaps, for example, Brooklyn Navy Yard would be blasted. There are 50,000 people working there, but we can assume that only a small percentage of those people would actually be casualties.

So, while the 20 cities contain less than one-fifth of the Nation's population, they do have 37.5 percent of all the nonagricultural jobs

and 40 percent of all the manufacturing jobs in the country. If the assumptions were set so that ground zero would be highly destructive of manufacturing capacity, the attack would wreck the central city shops and factories and work places, but it would not reach vast percentages of the work force who, at the hour of the attack, would be sleeping at home. This is all developing this theme for the possibility of a surplus in manpower.

It is perhaps trite to say that in wartime manpower is our ultimate limiting resource. It is true, manpower is one thing that cannot be stockpiled. If words mean anything at all, this means that some other resource becomes limiting before the ultimate of manpower is reached. How true this would be under your assumptions! Many other resources would limit our effort before general manpower shortages would do so.

The first decisions that would have to be made following the attack would concern ways and means of putting out the fires, of burying the dead, of collecting the wounded, cleaning the streets, helping the helpless, and so on. All those things are necessary to return to the peaceful flow of goods and services necessary to sustain life.

Who is to make the decisions? Under your assumption, civilian rule is to be maintained. Organized civil government may be as sorely stricken as the personnel that makes up civil government. In any case, no city government, even if it is fully functioning, is equipped to deal with problems of such magnitude.

A first job, then, would be to reconstitute the fabric of government at its local level. Somebody has to make the basic decisions as to what fire is put out first and as to what street is cleared out first. Plans must be made so that we can retain a system for democratically choosing the leaders who, at best, will have to make many arbitrary decisions during this reconstruction period. As you and I try to think through the process of reconstituting the Federal Government structure, you may conclude that we will not be able to rely on a strong central Federal Government for a while, at least.

Many agencies, and the Department of Labor is one of them, have set up regional structures for the administration of the program under their cognizance. As I have indicated, we have already the regional labor-management committees, and we have those committees working with our regional offices.

Perhaps the best known wartime function of the Department of Labor concerns itself with what we refer to as the Federal-State Employment

Service. This would be a principal manpower operating agency in the event of an emergency. We have 11 regional offices which have continuing peacetime duties in the operation of this Federal-State Employment Service. They work with some 51 employment-security headquarters and, in turn, with approximately 1,700 state-employment service offices located throughout the United States, Hawaii, and Alaska.

We also have regional offices in strategic centers for the operation of apprenticeship programs through which workers would be trained for war production. This is an existing setup. I think some of you might be aware that during the invasion of Italy one of the first steps of the military government was to go to the employment-exchange offices in the towns. There, they felt, were the greatest collections of records on the makeup of the local work force and their apprentices in the necessary skills.

The Department of course has other activities also at regional levels, principally those activities which would concern a problem such as you have here. However, unfortunately, out of the 11 regional offices for manpower operating purposes, only 3 would not be touched under your assumptions. Those are Denver, Atlanta, and Dallas. The State headquarters which, theoretically, run the manpower program are also often State capitals and are among the 20 cities which you have listed. State government would be disrupted, to say the least.

I don't think it can be stressed too much that the assumptions, if realized, will damage our war-production capacity more than the casualty figures imply. I have pointed out that we could have more people left than we have productive facilities. We all have heard that, come another war, it would be much more rigorous for civilians and we would turn a far bigger fraction of our gross national product into munitions than we did during World War II. That is a general statement you hear. But, again, I think we might have just the opposite. Perhaps, far from being able to cut civilian consumption below the World War II level, as a percentage of gross national product, we might have to provide a bigger percentage of gross national product to replace, even at a primitive level, the living accommodations which the bombs destroy. Again, that is not, I think, an original thought, but it still is counter to what is generally thought. "Come the next war, we are going to make the American people have a little less than they did in the last war." If we have the kind of war you are assuming, our factories, if they are able to maintain a normal production capacity, which we know they won't, may have to produce more things for civilians than we have at least assumed.

We would also have to pay at the same time a lot of attention to restoring a system of the distribution of goods. We take for granted the free and open markets and the synchronization of supply and demand which characterize our system of distribution in our economy today. This system, too, is smashed, as market facilities are disrupted. Our economy is not set up to function except with the freest and quickest distribution of goods and services. Goods flow freely; each family, each city, and each State depends on the outside for many of its basic necessities. It is this very aspect of our economy that gives us our greatest strength during peacetime, but which at the same time makes us most vulnerable in a sudden wartime economy.

Localities, like people, tend to specialize in doing what they can do best and in relying on others to supply what others can do best. For the short run, then, we could be thrown back to possibly a feudal economy, with each locality and each group having to help itself more or less in an attempt to make itself self-sufficient.

While our cropland, and even the food warehouses, may not be damaged, goods will not flow until a structure of markets, communications, and transportation is reestablished. So that, even if there were a strong civilian central government brought into being quickly and it resorted itself to requisitioning and commandeering goods and facilities, it could not move the goods where it wanted them until much more reconstruction had taken place.

We might also expect some disruption to the economic system because, at least initially, I assume, there would be some hoarding and other sharp practices. I don't think we can make any mistake that our preservation of life will engage our attention for at least the immediate. It may take all our best efforts to resume the kind of pattern we have at present. The maintenance of the family, the protection of the helpless, the continuation of the race itself, become the problems of first concern.

This sort of ties in with number 5, which dealt with psychological effects. I don't presume to talk on that particular point in detail.

The next aspect in your assignment is "Time and Productive Resources Required for Satisfactory Restoration." The first question is: Restoration of what, for what? Our own city turns out a commodity, government, which could be manufactured almost anywhere else. There would be a symbolic value in restoring the Federal city to serve as a

rallying point in the war, but, for what it would cost, perhaps Washington should not be restored at all. That same might also be said of the other 19 cities. It would not be so much what should we restore as it would be what do we want to produce and what are we able to produce. There is little point in rebuilding a plant or an entire city if its suppliers of materials or components are not rebuilt simultaneously. This ties in with manpower. Production decisions would have to be made before we know what to do with manpower. Whole complexes of plants and facilities would have to be constructed in order to achieve the chosen objectives.

So we come to the question which again is related to the whole question of manpower: What kind of military tactical effort would we try to carry out after the morning of the attack? That decision will largely dictate our production and manpower effort. We can guess that the Strategic Air Command is prepared to launch a retaliatory attack on short notice on that first morning. We will presumably knock out their cities, which would have a political and morale effect on the country of the enemy, as well as an effect on its production.

After the attack, what do we do? The kind of war we propose to fight dictates the decision on which rests the kind of production we would have to undertake and the kind of restoration of industrial facilities that would be needed. There is a temptation to refight World War II. I think you people certainly know that better than I do; but in any event it is the easy thing to think about. Certainly the public envisions World War II. So we have to, if we can, get away from that kind of thing, because, going back to the kind of production facilities that would be needed, it is questionable whether we would then want to duplicate our World War II industrial machine against an enemy equipped with nuclear weapons.

How many men would we have in uniform? I think on the answer to that question would rest the answers to how many people in the civilian force would be available. The disposition of these people and the duty given them gives us the answer as to the level and kind of support the homefront would have to supply. The more complex the weapons, the more specialized and irreplaceable becomes the producer. It so happens I took this job just shortly after the fire in Livonia, Michigan, which as you know destroyed the single plant facility making hydromatic drives for General Motors. One of the first duties I had was to certify the requirements for the importation of Canadians who specialized in tool and die work to help get the facilities back on their feet. It's a sort of interesting thing, because we can see that in the destruction of one plant we had to go outside the country to bring in people.

So, using your assumptions, I think we can say that we have too many single sources of supply. I don't know that we could afford to restore plants for building only single-purpose weapons.

A friend of mine has said that he didn't know how the next war would be fought, but that he was sure that the one after that would be fought with pitchforks. I am not sure that we should not advance that estimate by one war.

These questions are not within my responsibility to answer. I use the prerogative of asking questions instead of giving answers. I offer these for your consideration and for the consideration of your brother officers at the National War College. They are samples of the kinds of decisions we are going to have to think through before this hypothetical morning of destruction--at least I hope they are.

After these decisions are made as to what we want to produce and in what volumes and balances, comes the decision as to who is to rebuild. Does the corporation whose plant is destroyed rebuild? Does the Government? Who owns the plant? These are more questions that have to be answered. When the answers are found, they will set the framework and patterns of the production program of the Armed Forces and of the manpower strength required for both military and civilian operations.

I reiterate the two rules which we are trying to follow in developing manpower programs:

One is that manpower programs must be developed simultaneously with the programs that manpower is intended to serve.

The second is that production decisions dictate the manpower requirements. To a very large extent it is true that manpower requirements dictate the level of manpower resources, because we definitely do have an elasticity in the labor force.

We in the manpower business are determined, and I am sure that all other agencies in town are also determined, that war responsibilities will be carried out, even within the assumptions of this problem, with the greatest latitude for the exercise of free choice by the individual.

Your assumptions are going to make it pretty hard for many individuals to realize the employment choices they would like to make. If our people truly want to do what is the most efficient thing for the war effort, they will have to make choices which, within your assumptions, in many cases, would be repugnant to the average American today. Our national spirit and dedication will have to be such that, once fully informed, we will volunteer to do those unpleasant and, in many cases, very painful chores which your assumptions predict would be necessary.

I would like to suggest a few of the manpower problems that might emerge, in my judgment.

In the early days right after the attack there will be a bottomless demand for protective workers, nurses, cooks, firemen--all kinds of those workers. The next manpower problem would probably emerge after the first initial demand in the form of construction workers in some areas, in greater numbers than those areas would be able to supply.

A third type of manpower problem would come about in having to make highly mobile those workers possessed of the rare critical skills necessary at that time.

Closely related to providing manpower to the jobs they ought to fill will come decisions as to devices to attract workers to the jobs the Government wants filled. I think we might say here that probably money wages won't be too important. I would imagine that real wages of goods and services will have to be provided to attract and hold workers. Some kind of priority is going to have to be established between workers, and also some kind of priority between workers and nonworkers.

In the 20 cities, Government employment in the protective and custodial service occupations would have a first claim on manpower resources. Similarly, all cities other than the 20 would immediately expand their protective and civilian defense services and employment very greatly. The responsibility of the armed services to render assistance in the zone of interior would have to be spelled out and would have a significant effect on the number of civilian workers otherwise required.

As just mentioned, and as I have indicated earlier, as the crux of this whole thing, we are going to have to rely on the good will and patriotism of the population to want to fill the jobs that need filling. I understand you may have had, and in some respects you certainly have had,

talks on the psychological reactions. Colonel Bartlett mentioned to me that you listened to a speech on destruction that would have much that might affect the American people. It was encouraging to note in the very brief conversation we had on that--I don't know that it is fair for me to try to paraphrase it, not having heard it--but at least I gathered that the conclusion is that the American people won't become all panicky and think only of self-survival. As one speaker thought, certainly we may have panic, but we hope it will fit in with these appraisals I am concluding my talk with, that this good will and patriotism will prevail.

The toughest military assignments are filled by volunteers. We hope this same spirit would animate the civilian worker at home. An enlightened and informed population will recognize, we hope, that they are acting in their own self-interest when they do necessary war work. If the Government were authorized to order workers to take and stay on given jobs in private employment, we would still have to do all the various things--and more--to make those jobs tolerable and productive than we would have to do if we relied on workers cooperating solely on a voluntary basis.

This is the thought, in concluding, that I would like to leave with you. The existence of a law which would authorize the President to direct a citizen to take a job or to change jobs as between private employers would not in itself solve the manpower problems which a war would bring. The law would not tell us which jobs ought to be filled or with what kinds of workers. Every step that would have to be taken without a law--training workers, providing them with living accommodations for themselves and their families, providing them with an efficient working environment, and giving them incentives to produce--would likewise have to be observed in administering a law if it were on the statute books.

I am not going to attempt to outline exact lines of authority at this time. I think it is of great importance to know what to do and how to do it. Our present thinking is that a free people will respond effectively when awakened to the danger to their lives and to their liberties, and when they are informed of what each man should do.

That concludes my remarks.

MR. NIKLASON: Mr. Siciliano is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Mr. Siciliano, the Director of ODM and his Assistant Director for Manpower have a definite responsibility for assuring that

the United States manpower programs are put into effect. To insure an orderly transition from peace to war under full mobilization conditions, ODM has issued a couple of directives--one to Commerce and one to Agriculture--covering the responsibilities in those fields. Has ODM issued policy guidance to the Department of Labor in the field of manpower and, if so, what specific programs has Labor engaged in or has under way now to cover that aspect of going to full mobilization? I would like to exclude the Labor-Management Manpower Policy Committee.

MR. SICILIANO: The order which specifically defines and delegates authority to the Department of Labor from ODM has not yet been issued. We are working on that delegation now with Dr. Flemming. It perhaps is not so easy to write up as some of the others--you mentioned Agriculture and Commerce. The reason for that, I think, is that there is not an awareness of the role of the Department of Labor; and part of the delegation--this is my interpretation--is conditioned by public acceptance, we will say, of what the Department of Labor should do. I think part of it might be, getting back into history--this is going to be a long answer and part of it might be associated, at least in the public's mind, with the idea that the Department of Labor is set up by law to take the "side" of the unionman as distinguished from the welfare of the workingman, whether or not he is organized. We do have functions which are of great concern to businesses and universities and everybody else in the country. For instance, the Department concerns itself with the employment service, which as you know is a Federal-State program. We have the apprenticeship program; we have the wage-hour law to administer. I won't go into all of them. Perhaps the best known Department of Labor statistical service is the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It, in turn, has the best reservoir of all that pertains to the skills and crafts in the United States. We have the best place to turn to, to find out what our working force is and how it is broken down--by numbers and so forth. We have this peacetime function. It is essential to have the clear delegation of what would be our role in an emergency. We are working on that delegation. It is not yet done, as I say, for reasons that will take time to answer.

I don't know if I have answered directly.

STUDENT: Are there any other specific programs addressing themselves directly to the problem of planning for full mobilization?

MR. SICILIANO: As a part of my office, in the reconstituting order that was issued the day after I took this job, we have an Office

of Manpower Administration. That is a very small group of people. It is, I hope, the group that will concern itself with a broader view than perhaps they have had in the past--but to say we have exact plans worked out would be saying too much.

QUESTION: I would like to ask about this national service legislation or the requirement for it. You stated labor and management are against it, and they think voluntary labor would meet the requirements. Is that the unanimous opinion of the Department of Labor and the Administration, or are you accepting the labor-management opinion?

MR. SICILIANO: No; we--the Department of Labor--served as cochairmen with ODM in a moderator's sense only. This document of the labor-management program of manpower utilization is a document of labor and management people. We served as the housekeeping part of it. We did not take a part in making these decisions. It was not our function. That is strictly a private group, so to say.

QUESTION: Do you have any plans for any national service in the event of a catastrophe?

MR. SICILIANO: We have no such plans.

STUDENT: Has there been any discussion?

MR. SICILIANO: There has been a lot of discussion. In reading over one talk a guest speaker gave you people last fall, which made a distinction between the thinking of the labor-management manpower group and that of the governmental group, he mentioned that the labor-management manpower group is inclined to think there must be a following of the voluntary system, and that the governmental group thinks there should be implementing legislation of a more rigorous or mandatory type. That is just in the conversational stage. I don't know whether I put that accurately or not when I said "conversational stage," but there has been lots of discussion on it. It is a very ticklish subject. I don't know the answer to what should follow in the event the voluntary arrangement wasn't working to the highest extent. There may have to be some kind of implemental legislation; but no specific planning has been done up to this time. Usually your labor-management group does not envisage anything beyond the voluntary basis.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, with regard to the labor unions and strikes in time of war, do you contemplate the outlawing of strikes in this mobilization effort?

MR. SICILIANO: I have not contemplated that far.

STUDENT: Would you care to discuss it, sir?

MR. SICILIANO: It is not that I want to say "no comment." But I certainly have not given it enough thought to warrant a positive approach to it. During World War II I don't think we actually had any specific outlawing of strikes that we knew in many instances could be to our detriment. I would not want to put myself in the position of specifically saying that we should in another war.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, would you comment on your personal opinion of the political possibility of getting through at this time any sort of standby legislation regarding labor controls.

MR. SICILIANO: You are asking a political question.

STUDENT: Yes, sir.

MR. SICILIANO: I am not a politician. My personal opinion would be that there is not enough public awareness, at least at this time, for that kind of approach.

QUESTION: Is there not some activity going on in the Department of Labor to determine the manpower resources that are going to be required in an emergency mobilization to support the civilian requirements?

MR. SICILIANO: Yes, if you mean a gathering of all the available data on the makeup of the war force. That means not only in numbers, but also their geographical locations. We have that information, or as much as we can get of it, and we are continuing along those lines. I think, to convert that to its applicability in case of war is something we have not done and we are not able to do, because we are not charged with doing it. But from a data point of view, yes.

STUDENT: If there were any question as to whether the personnel should be put to war-goods manufacture rather than to civilian support, wouldn't the Department of Labor be considered as the claimant agency to support that requirement in a mobilization?

MR. SICILIANO: I don't think I am going to make the determination on that as to the role of the Department of Labor, whether or not it

should be the agency that would do this kind of thing; that has not been determined. I think there are lots of views on that. Lots of views would favor a central, overall mobilization manpower agency to do this kind of work, using the services of the Department of Labor--all the data that we would furnish it. Naturally, there would be adherence to the side of the agency that is doing it. If I wanted to be very partisan I would say, perhaps, that I think we should. I don't say that. I say we are not a service function, so to speak, at least at this time. The agency that is going to do the actual decision making generally, should be in terms of what is thought of as ODM or a similar type agency.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, in case the top hierarchy of the Department of Labor is wiped out in the A-bomb attack, what are the plans for the continuation of the administration of the Department?

**MR. SICILIANO:** That is part of what we are working on right at the present time. As you know, on 14 June we have a relocation exercise. In contemplation of that, each agency of the Government has been given an area to use for its emergency relocation point. We intend to--but we haven't done this as yet--set up at such a point files, duplicate records, and so on, that would be necessary to carry out at least the manpower role of today--the peacetime manpower role. There would probably be no attempt to carry out some of the operating programs that exist in the Department of Labor.

So far as the people themselves are concerned, we rely on the regional setups that we have, which we assume--at least some--will remain intact. We have, further, a number of records of some of the agencies, some that may not seem too important and yet will be important in this kind of thing. We hope the relocation plan we are now working on will answer that question more specifically.

**COLONEL BARTLETT:** Mr. Siciliano, you speak of the knowledge available in the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is my understanding that it deals primarily with the current labor force, or perhaps a labor force during past times, on employment, unemployment, their skills, and distribution. It seems to me we ought to have as part of the census a national tabulation of all skills in the population, including women, elderly people, and young men, plus even an extension to what you might call secondary skills, or the conversion of skills; so that a brick worker constructing a public building might be put on a blast furnace to build that up. Would any such scheme be feasible? Are there difficulties in taking a national tabulation of current skills and secondary skills, nationwide and population-wide?

MR. SICILIANO: I don't think it would be insurmountable. I think the idea is a very good one. I don't know if I would agree with you as to where it should be located, but I think it can be easily done, provided the money was forthcoming for such a national census survey.

As you know, the Census Bureau today in its census of unemployment uses a sampling system--not an actual count. This is ballooned up from a figure of 25,000. The Bureau builds that up and plays it on a national level. What you are suggesting would go beyond that. It would be an actual count. It would be a good thing; however, it would take time and money.

QUESTION: One of the most inefficient ways of running a business is to have your workers leave you before they learn their jobs. During the last war we found many of the war industries, including the shipyards, with fantastic rates of labor turnover. How would this system of voluntarism, relying on each man to do what he chooses to do, and hoping that will be in the national interest, meet this question of labor turnover so that we could keep our productivity up at a reasonably high level?

MR. SICILIANO: I think probably part of the philosophy behind the suggested system of voluntarism would be based on a set of facts--your assumptions that you are using. In other words, I don't think there would be any real basis for the comparison with a past war. I may be overconfident here, but in any event I am assuming that an actual destruction of the kind your problem has set up for the cities of the United States will be the first time this country has been attacked; that there will be a national realization that we have to do something and do it immediately; and that there will have to be a voluntary philosophy, at least, behind the people wanting to help.

Now, as to whether or not there should be channeling lines of authority to indicate where to go because that is where we need the help first, I would assume that we would probably have to have those. There's thinking on it. I am not going to try to say you should or you should not have a rigid, compulsory system, but there are some who think that we should at least provide it and have it on the shelves, so to speak, for such an eventuality.

QUESTION: Has your secondary thinking that there should be some such plan reached any level as to what form it would take?

MR. SICILIANO: No.

QUESTION: In setting up a mobilization organization, there is always a question of whether to utilize existing agencies or to create new agencies. The problem of manpower in wartime, it can be alleged, involves a great deal more than just the problems of the workingman. It involves a balancing of the needs of industry against the needs of the military. Which kind of organization do you feel would be the best to solve that problem--a manpower board tied in with ODM or a complete delegation of that authority to the Department of Labor?

MR. SICILIANO: I think the assumption that most people have been using--and I certainly would agree with it--is that you can't identify these problems, say, of transportation, communications, and manpower, and then delegate to each of your existing agencies the responsibility for carrying out an aspect. I think we have to assume, and we are assuming, that there will be a central mobilization agency, such as ODM, and from that agency will come the direction along those various fields in order to get the integration that is so necessary. I would not think that the Labor Department, as such, would be charged wholly with the manpower responsibility, with no relationship to any other groups. You can't divorce it that easily.

QUESTION: In your program for emergency relocation, obviously only the essential functions would be relocated. How would you arrive at the criteria for determining the essential functions? Where did the criteria come from?

MR. SICILIANO: Those criteria are being worked out in our own department. We look at functions we are charged with today; we know some of them we will not be concerned with at all. To give you a few examples, we have a Women's Bureau which is charged with maintaining and looking after women's equality of treatment in the labor force. I think probably the function of that entire Bureau would be set aside for a time. There is also the Bureau of Veterans' Reemployment Rights, which has to do with getting a veteran back on the job. I would not assume this would take any real role in this kind of situation.

We in the Department of Labor look at those functions we think are necessary. We go back to what we think we would need. What we would need would simply be a complete listing and complete statistical surveys made of every work area in the United States, with a breakdown as to the composition of this labor force. These are data we must have. That is what we will be concerning ourselves with. We may not be doing it

right at the present time. We have these things, and the manpower program would be concentrating on using these available data under the guidance of the Department of Labor.

We have to forget certain things like gathering affidavits from our workers saying they are Communists or non-Communists, a function introduced under the Taft-Hartley Act. What we need is a listing of the functions we think are important.

**DR. HUNTER:** During the last war--at its beginning--you recall, Mr. Secretary, there was quite a problem in determining the location of new industrial plants; one of the common problems was the locations of labor surplus. During the course of the war numerous plants were established in nonindustrial areas. Are there many such labor surpluses in nonindustrial areas in which war plants could be erected in the event of reconstruction of blasted plants?

**MR. SICILIANO:** We have pretty good records, I think. As you know, since 1939, actually, the Department of Labor has been surveying communities throughout the United States and has been giving a classification to the labor supply, as Groups 1, 2, 3, and 4, with Group 4 being an area of substantial labor surplus. We have surveys of all major communities. Those that are regularly surveyed are 149 in number today. Those that are surveyed on an irregular or request basis number several hundred. We list these towns and we pretty well know what is in them. It is one thing to say Rock Springs, Wyoming, is a labor-surplus area and relocate there. You have to know more than that; you have to know about the facilities available and so forth.

**DR. HUNTER:** I was thinking more specifically of agriculture. Take the southern Appalachian area--it has been traditionally a labor-surplus area. Large numbers were drawn from it up into the Detroit area and so on. Do many such areas still exist?

**MR. SICILIANO:** I would say there are still quite a number. They often are chronic or long-term areas of unemployment. You have a long-term surplus of labor because of the unemployment there, particularly in the hard-coal territories, and in the New England States, in the old textile towns.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, in attacking this problem of relocation of the Federal Government, I believe greater emphasis is being placed now upon greater decentralization of functions and responsibilities to

field agencies. In studying this problem we notice that there is no similar pattern, for example, either in location or number of regional areas, between Labor, Commerce, ODM, and FCDA, and so on. We recognize that these regions were originally set up with specific considerations, but, in the light of the situation created by the problem, have there been any studies or efforts made to standardize these Federal regions in the various agencies?

MR. SICILIANO: Not to my knowledge--they are usually actual departmental considerations. When Secretary Mitchell came in, we looked into the question of regional offices from a comparative view--as you might go to another agency to find out what led them to make the determination that regional offices should be in such States. But there is no coordinating effort being made on the whole governmental level.

I am not too sure that uniformity is what you might want, in any event. I can at least throw that out as a question.

MR. NIKLASON: Thank you, Mr. Siciliano, for your very interesting lecture and discussion period, which I am sure will be very helpful in stimulating the thoughts of the student body in the solution of their problem.

(29 June 1954--750)S/ibc