

WSM, March 15, 1942

Good Morning, Friends:

The most significant thing of the week in Washington was the President's announcement that study was being given to the application of a ceiling on wages and profits as well as on prices. One of the weaknesses of a democracy is the postponement of effective action to deal with a problem until the problem actually arises. It is most difficult - yes, well nigh impossible - to bring about drastic action to deal with a problem which it is anticipated will arise at some future date. Most thinking people realized many months ago that it would be necessary to place restraints upon all major segments of our economy, if wild inflation were to be avoided. But the Congress would not at that time pass a law sufficiently strong to deal with the problem, nor would the President at that time support ^{such} a strong ~~enough~~ law. It is heartening, however, even now, though inflationary pressures are already being exerted, to know from the President that serious study is being given to the problem.

The economy wave has begun to roll in the House of Representatives against appropriations which are not essential for winning the war. It is almost an unheard of thing for the House of Representatives to spend two full weeks on an agriculture appropriation bill, but that is just what has happened. Every paragraph of a one hundred page appropriation bill was hotly contested. Millions of dollars were sliced from the bill before it was finally passed. Undoubtedly letters from the people to their Congressmen demanding that everything be made secondary to the war has had an effect. Most of the agriculture programs

are fine and good, but certainly some of them can be postponed until we win the war. After all, it takes one dollar of administrative cost for every two dollars of benefits which go to the farmer. There was 16 million dollars in the bill for travel expense. That's a lot of travelling. The House of Representatives cut this half in two. The bill now goes to the Senate, and it remains to be seen ^{how} ~~whether~~ the move to reduce non-essential expenditures will ^{fare in} ~~reach~~ that body. It may be that the people will succeed in awakening the Senate, not only to the need for cutting out a lot of frills and furbalows and nonsense which can not but harm rather than help in the war program, but maybe the people can wake up the Senate to the need for labor legislation. Last fall, the House passed the Smith anti-strike bill by a 2-to-1 vote, but to this good day, the Senate has not even given it consideration, nor has the Senate given any real consideration to any bill which would place restraints upon organized labor's wild ride to power and special privilege.

The 40-hour week is a thing which demands the immediate attention of both Houses of Congress and of the President. The House of Representatives recently considered an amendment which would have suspended the law which requires time and a half pay for all overtime above 40 hours a week. Most of the Representatives from the Southern States supported this amendment, but it failed largely because a mere suspension of the law would not solve the problem. It would help some, but we will have to go further than merely suspending the law to reach the heart of the problem. To do very much good, the minimum

work week would have to be extended to more than 40 hours and all overtime pay ^{short of} ~~beyond~~ this point would have to be forbidden. The 40-hour week law was passed in time of peace, When the government was trying to solve the unemployment problem, It was thought that if the work week were shortened, more people would be given employment. The time has passed when we need to shorten the work week. In time of war a 40-hour week is wholly indefensible. Certainly the farmers, who are already having a hard time finding enough help to operate their farms, are not bound by any 40-hour week. Certainly the men in the army, know no 40-hour limitation nor do they receive time and a half for overtime nor double time for holidays. Mr. Donald Nelson, Head of the War Production Board, made a significant speech a few days ago. He said that if all of our plants would operate a full 24 hours a day, our production would be doubled. Now that's an alarming statement. This situation can not be tolerated. Of course, Congress can not run the production program. Congress can not plan military strategy. Congress can not even execute the laws which it passes. These things are powers which the President and the Members of the Executive Branch of the Government must perform. But Congress can pass adequate laws to deal with the situation. That certainly is a constitutional function of the Congress. And more than that, the Congress is the one governmental agency through which the weight of the people's voice and sentiment can be brought to bear upon the government. It's a good sign for the people to be writing their Representatives and Senators demanding an all-out war effort. It shows

that the people are aroused to the grave threat to the very existence of this nation and that they are demanding that everything within the power of the government be done to win the war as quickly as possible. That is a true American spirit. Let it grow. Let it become more demanding and insistent, and let it drive from positions of public trust all men who prove themselves unworthy of such trust in the Nation's hour of peril.

The voice of the people, which articulates public opinion, is the most powerful force in a democratic form of government. Indeed, it is the blood stream of representative government. In recent years, the cancerous growth of organized minorities has impeded the flow of this vital blood stream through ~~the~~ ^{our} body politic. Only when public opinion has become acutely aroused has it been able to overcome the influence of organized minorities. To be brutally frank, we have had government of minorities. Those who believe in equal rights ^{to} ~~of~~ all and special privilege to none ~~can~~ ^{will} happily hail the day when the voice of the people becomes so loud that the selfish cries of minority groups are completely drowned out by its harmonious crescendo.

Criticism of the President must now be confined to constructive criticism. He is the only President we have. He is the only Commander-in-Chief we have. Upon his leadership we must rely. Unless he leads us, we are leaderless. Therefore, let ~~allof~~ ^{all} us be doubly careful that we be not a party ^{to} ~~of~~ any movement, opinion, or ^{allow} single word which would undermine confidence in his leadership. Perhaps it would be best if all of us pointed to those things which need to be

done instead of criticizing that which has been done. The sins of the past have been committed. It does no good to cry over spilled milk. Let us quit growling and quarrelling and fighting over the errors of the past. Let the dead past bury its dead, and let us ^{*all of us - each and every one -*} set our faces firmly to the future, and with unity and determination do ~~all and~~ everything necessary to win the war. The destiny of America - yes, the destiny of freedom, the course of mankind for generations to come - is at stake, ~~but~~ We must not falter! We must not fail!

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