

Station WSM
June 6, 1943

Good Morning, Friends:

The glaring news of the week, not only in Washington but also in Japan and Germany, ^{where our enemies are gloating over it,} is the coal strike of the United Mine Workers.

This is the second strike of the Mine Workers within a month. When the first strike was called, President Roosevelt went on the radio, not as Commander in Chief, not as President, but as the friend of the working man, and made an earnest, patriotic plea for the miners to return to their war-time duty. Only a few minutes before the President made his appeal, John L. Lewis declared a truce and ordered the miners to go back to their jobs. It was, therefore, never known just how many miners would have gone back to work upon the President's plea and against the orders of John L. Lewis.

In the present strike, ^{Mr. Roas did} ~~the President~~ acted as President and as Commander in Chief and directed and ordered the miners to return to their wartime jobs ^{+ duty} on tomorrow. So far, the majority of the miners appear to have chosen to follow Lewis, the dictator of their Union. Why do you suppose they choose to follow Lewis' leadership rather than to follow the President of the United States and ~~not~~ the undoubted promptings of their own patriotic impulses?

Read from speech

We will not get at the root of the evil unless we uproot the system by which one man is given the power to say who shall and who shall not work in an entire industry. Frankly, I regard this situation as very grave. Within the body politic but without government control or regulation, we have permitted political organizations, such as the United Mine workers, to grow to such proportions that they now threaten the sovereignty of the government itself. And as I see it, government by law, instead of by men in this great free nation is challenged and is dangerously near a breakdown. Here we have John L. Lewis, an absolute dictator of the Mine Workers Union, placing his own imperious will above the law and above the interest of his country at war. He is demanding the loyalty of the miners. And yet, he is prostituting that very loyalty and using it as a paw^v in his vindictive political onslaught against the President of the United States.

On last Friday, the House of Representatives, by a vote of 231 to 141, passed a bill designed to stop wartime strikes and also to curb the evil which promotes them. The bill was not as strong as I would ~~have~~ liked to ~~have seen~~ it, but perhaps the ~~simple~~ best the House could do under the circumstances. The bill which we passed was an amended version of the Conally Bill which recently passed the Senate. It is a much stronger bill, though, than the original Conally Bill. Frankly, I don't think the Conally Bill, as it passed the Senate, would amount to a Pewter button. The House amended it and put some teeth in it. It will go back to the Senate now and

reports are that that body may again be unwilling to accept what the House has done. This is not the first time the House of Representatives has passed ^{strong} ~~strike-labor~~ ^{anti} legislation. The House has frequently done so, only to see the measure die in the Senate. I hope this one meets with more Senatorial favor.

To me, it seems axiomatic that no system of government can permit political organizations to grow up within itself and not be subject to control or regulation by the government unless the government is to be eventually swallowed up by its own irresponsible offspring. The consequences of this conflict are hard to over-emphasize. If Lewis wins his demands, he will prove that it is more profitable to defy the government and strike than it is to obey the laws of the land, or to cooperate with the government in time of war. If John L. Lewis wins, then other labor leaders must win similar concessions or they will lose their position in labor politics. The Coal Miners controversy, then, is a bellwether for other unions. If Lewis' demands are met, other unions, one by one or perhaps many at the time, will demand that similar concessions be made to them. If, therefore, Lewis wins, the very foundation of the anti-inflation program will be undermined. The President's "hold the line" order will then be shot to pieces. The little steel formula will be out the window. If Lewis wins, it will shake the country's confidence in President Roosevelt's ^{wartime} leadership of the Country. If Lewis wins, it will be a triumph of mob action over government by law. So, this whole conflict is fraught with drama and political

tragedy. Government must win. Government by law must ^{win} ~~win~~ ~~must win~~ over
the stubborn will of one of its citizens.

During the week, Congress finally passed a pay-as-you-go tax collection bill, which cancels 75% of one year's tax liability for every income tax payer and sent this measure, over which ^{anxious fight} the House voted for months, to the President for his signature.

On Tuesday, the Senate passed a bill extending the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Program for another three years. The bill passed without substantial amendment, which ^{was} ~~is~~ a marvelous victory for Secretary of State Cordell Hull. It was also a marvelous victory for the people of the United States, ^{because} ~~for~~ a defeat of the program at this critical time would have had far-reaching war implications. ^{this program} ~~It~~ has served as the basis for all of our international understandings for the post-war period, and its repudiation at this time would have shaken world confidence in the nobility of our aims of war and peace.

^{United Nations}
The ~~International~~ Food Conference concluded its sessions during the week in a blaze of agreement and international fraternity. Perhaps this is only a prelude to the many United ~~States~~ Nations conferences which must be held and in which all the victorious nations must participate and cooperate, if peace is to be made secure.