

A free, responsible and aggressive Press is democracy's first line of defense



By GENE ALLEMAN

This article is not anti-labor. Nor is it pro-management. Instead it seeks, as objectively as possible, to be straight with Americans, presenting facts as we get them about today's war urgency in Michigan.

In the first place, here's the Michigan situation of war manpower and production. Michigan is high on the list of critical contracts, some of which have been increased as much as 200 per cent. More war material vs. fewer workers!

Production requirements have been stepped up sharply. Michigan's manpower contribution to the military forces is now approximately 50,000. Michigan draft boards are being reclassified for military duty. Fewer workers will be left to fill the essential jobs on the home front.

For example, take the tank production picture. Tanks have made a strong comeback. Whereas production early in 1944 had peaked at 1,200 per month, requirements today are nearly 2,000 a month. Designs have been changed also with a trend toward greater firepower and mobility including wider treads.

The Chrysler and Fisher tank areals are now producing a heavy tank of new design, deliveries of which have already started.

Another item is rockets. The production schedule for rockets called for a 25 per cent increase over December.

January production in December was 1 per cent over the November total, but still 2 per cent behind quotas as of December 31. December production record achieved at the time of the costly German breakthrough at Bastogne, is scarcely cause for cheering.

Another "must" is heavy-heavy trucks with the foundry industry a temporary bottleneck.

"All right," you say, "but war plants are making tanks or rockets or trucks. What can I do about it?" There's where the average reader may be mistaken. The big war plants depend on hundreds of subcontractors, for vitally needed parts. And hundreds of these subcontractors are located in small cities and towns throughout Michigan. Don't be so positive that the "other war plants" in Detroit, Flint, Pontiac or Jackson will maintain a few of the leading industrial centers. A critical bottle-

neck may develop right in your own home town.

With fewer persons left on the Michigan home front available to work and with greater war contracts than ever on hand to be met, solution of the problem is not going to be easy.

It is possible for production per worker to be increased?

On the basis of official information obtained from leading army, navy and War Production Board officials in Detroit, the emphatic answer is "Yes!"

The regional director of the War Production Board, Carsten Tiedeman, thinks so. There is no manpower shortage in Detroit. There is a decline in worker efficiency, a dozen more to be lost to the war effort.

Workers are told by some union leaders not to increase production. "Don't speed up" is the word.

An auto company executive was asked for a 25 per cent increase a few days ago when he came across two workers down on their knees begging for a raise. A dozen more stood about watching. Did he fire them? Of course not. Why cause a strike?

Instances of this kind are available literally by the thousands. The workers' union production board officials know about them.

Well, what can be done about it?

One suggestion is that President Roosevelt summon the presidents of local unions to the White House and discuss a personal appeal to them to waive production restrictions and let the workers turn out the goods.

Another suggestion is for management to provide a wage incentive through his factory. A few days ago when he came across two workers down on their knees begging for a raise, a dozen more stood about watching. Did he fire them? Of course not. Why cause a strike?

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We are haunted by a picture of the metamorphosis of certain words spoken by an American Senator over the radio and reiterated on the floor of the Senate. "Abandon unconditional surrender terms," said Senator Wheeler, "they are brutal and costly..."

The words span the ocean. They fly through the air to Europe, via Spain and Lishan and Switzerland and Sweden. They turn into an Elxir of Hope, swallowed by the German spies and diplomats and men of the Nazi listening posts in Europe.

Their journey continues. Through cables and wires, and by courier, they filter into Berlin and the deadly propaganda weapons of Doctor Goebbels and the secret nucleus of the German General Staff charged with the preparation of World War III where they are forged into weapons to be used against the allies.

And still they travel, this time eastward to the fronts in Belgium, France and Holland, into pillboxes, underground dugouts, Wehrmacht encampments, into the tunnels of the Nazi panzers, and the steel emplacements of the German man their machine guns.

They have grown large and hoarse and powerful and say "Don't give up now. America is weakening. Americans are weary. We can still save ourselves. We can get a soft peace. Hold! Kill! The American home front will crack. They are saying Unconditional Surrender is bluff! Shoot, kill, destroy until your last bullet is gone. We can still win the peace."

And Hans and Fritz, sighting along their machine gun and rifle barrels, say—"If there is still hope, then let us shoot instead of surrendering..."

We are haunted by a picture of dead American soldiers, dark, silent heaps in the snow, the final metamorphosis of dangerous, reckless words...

Sentimentalism "I don't want to send a war hero to jail recently, in suspending sentence upon a sailor who had been convicted on a holdup job."

The ex-sailor had found a man into a rear room, bound and gagged him, then hit him on the head with a bottle. In order to rob him of a small sum of money. For this crime, the individual deserves punishment, regardless of whether he was a war hero or not.

The judge correctly charged him with perjury, an "infamous crime" but then, in an exhibition of silly sentimentality, declined to inflict any punishment.

OVER PRACTICALLY EVERY SEGMENT OF DOMESTIC activity our government exercises war time disciplines, without which the war on the home front can not be carried on successfully—that is, with the exception of labor organizations. This lack of discipline for labor is responsible for so many strikes, so many disputes between labor and management, so much loafing, absenteeism, and shoving up on the war jobs. Why isn't labor being disciplined? Ask Mister Politics.

The above situation is tragic. It is deplorable. American boys are sacrificing their lives. Read your newspaper for their names. You can be one of them. House this direct appeal to the American worker: PRODUCE MORE GOODS!

And this to management: TEAM UP! Quit the feud. Uncle Sam needs your help for victory in 1945.

IS CRANBROOK TRUSTEE? Trustees of the Cranbrook Institute of Science announce the election of Professor George M. Stanley of the department of geology, University of Michigan, to trusteeship in the Institute. Dr. Stanley is an authority on glacial geology of North America, and is the author of an Institute Bulletin "Geology of the Cranbrook Area."

SCHOLARSHIP IS OFFERED? Scholarships are available to Baldwin students who qualify for admission to the University of Michigan State College and Cornell College of Engineering for 1945, seniors who feel they can qualify may obtain scholarship application blanks and information from Mr. David Hartline, girls' counselor, and Larned Goodrich, boys' counselor.

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## New Weapon: Rockets?

Dispatches from the battlefield in Belgium speak of the use of a new "secret American artillery weapon," which was used against German counter-attacks and "cut the attackers to ribbons."

While details of the weapon were not given, the statement that "it was something the U. S. Navy had developed and which was found to be of great use against ground troops" indicates that it is the use of rockets on a large scale.

It has been announced that the Navy is manufacturing rockets for the use of both services. While less than a million dollars was spent for this purpose in 1943, expenditures for the present fiscal year include \$100,000,000 for rockets.

A Single Week In summarizing the food supply outlook for 1945, Chester Bowles, OPA Administrator, pays some attention to charge recently made in food trade circles that the government is hoarding huge quantities of food.

An OPA statement denies that the Army is hoarding vast stores of food and quotes military authorities to the effect that if on the day Japan is defeated "all Army foodstuffs throughout the world were brought back to the United States, the total amount would not be enough to feed the civilian population for a single week."

UNABLE TO PLY THEIR TRADE ON HORSE RACES these days, some of the professional gamblers have turned to amateur basketball games in schools and colleges. Here will be a character test for those who play the game; will many of them "play with" the gamblers to "throw the game"? Depends somewhat upon the example these youngsters see in their elders.

EVEN IN THESE WAR DAYS, we'll wager that Americans throw away enough food daily to feed millions of starving Europeans.

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## Happenings of Long Ago

50 Years Ago

February 7, 1895 "Remember LaSennora is manufactured in Birmingham."

"See here! A new milk cow with calf for sale at a reasonable price."

"Why is it that men are more liable to be swindled out of \$50 if the swindler only asks that it be paid in 81 installments?"

"Anyone wanting a pair of light blue slippers for the wife who the owner has no use, can hear of a bargain by inquiring of Mitchell at the O.P."

"A man entered a game of poker the other day for the purpose of winning himself out of debt. He's a figure defensible now."

"L. D. Finn, of Royal Oak, wishes it distinctly understood that he is not going to move away from that village reports to the contrary notwithstanding."

"If anyone finds a cushion for a chair seat in a snow drift between here and Franklin, they should at once give it to Horace Leight, the mail carrier, as it is his and was lost one day last week."

"John Bull is a shrewd old cuss. He don't wish to embroil himself with Japan; hence the story that Japanese gunboats fired upon the American flag. One Sam merely wins the other eye."

20 YEARS AGO February 6, 1925 "Fathers from more than two hundred and fifty homes in the village with their sons, will unite Tuesday evening at seven o'clock in a program prepared for the sole purpose of bringing the boys and fathers much needed together."

"Fred V. Quarten, at present a member of the village commission, has announced his entry in the race for supervisor of Bloomfield township, and will oppose Robert V. Moore at the township primary March 7."

"Requested some time ago to conduct the plan of inaugurating weekly religious instruction in the public schools of this district, the members of the school board last week made a written report on the matter."

"Lacking something of an unforeseen nature arising within the next few weeks, Michigan's statute books will contain an amendment for the creation of a Metropolitan District, to include Detroit and suburban cities within a radius of thirty miles. The object of the Metropolitan District is to provide means whereby these vibrant cities, in order to obtain sewer, water, and other public necessities, may be obtained more cheaply than by individual assessment districts to cover

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## Why?

Community House which is to be held in April."

"The first semester of evening classes closed last week. Classes were conducted in shorthand, typewriting and photography."

"The much discussed 'seavert' land sale to begin next Tuesday morning at Pontiac, may take a year or more to complete. It was discovered Wednesday by The Eccentric."

"Birmingham members of the American Legion are looking forward to the Post's annual 'Millionaires' party' to be held Friday night at the Home on South Woodward, starting at 9 p. m."

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