

Michigan Mirror

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

By GENE ALLEMAN

Michigan's postwar Tower of Babel is going to be dizzy. Witness this bit of demagoguery:
"City dollars a week or more should be paid by the federal government to each of the following: Every unemployed veteran or civilian.
Every wounded veteran.
Furthermore, each adult, 60 years old or more, should get from \$50 to \$40 per week as a retirement pension, also as the bounty of Uncle Sam."

The creator of this credo admits freely that "reactionaries" (such as this writer) are going to label him a "crackpot" who is appealing to "the lunatic fringe." The author is the former lieutenant of Louisiana's Huey Long whose political fame rested on "dividing the wealth" whereby every American was to become a king with a chicken for every meal. His name is Gerald L. K. Smith of Detroit, founder of the America First party and one-time primary opponent of Homer Ferguson for the Republican nomination to the United States Senate.

All of this Utopia is to be achieved, says the versatile Smith, if enough Americans respond to his appeal for a dues-paying membership in the America First party. Smith's personal money-making racket, and thus proceed to persuade Congress to save the country.

Unless they do this, we will have 20,000,000 unemployed within a year. Next, an era of wild inflation. And finally the smash-up of democracy by a "Red revolution."

It's all very simple to history. Gerald L. K. who thrives on publicity and probably will be delighted to read this about him.
Now you know and I know that Gerald does not believe personally in the above economic objectives. He does believe that there will be enough non-thinking saps in the 48 counties of Michigan who might be induced to subscribe to the screwy doctrine and to subscribe some of their own money into Smith's trust.

Contrasted to this sort of economic nonsense is some bread-and-butter plain talking and clear thinking by a Port Huron industrialist, F. L. Riggins, president of the Mueller Brass company, the town's leading source of employment and its biggest payroll.

In a full page message recently in the Port Huron Times Herald, Mr. Riggins presented the A-B-Cs about the business and its reconversion problems.

From a 1938 average of 1,261 workers, the Port Huron company increased its employment to a war-end figure of 3,781. Ninety per cent of 1,105 Mueller employees in the armed services have informed the boss they want their jobs back. "Taking out probationers, minors, part time workers and those who have since quit, leaves a total of 4,209 employees who want to work for this company," says Riggins. "Has Mueller Brass company a problem to face now? Can it do a peacetime business equal to the inflated war-time business which was four times as great as ever before? Can it furnish employment for the vastly increased payroll list, including returned veterans?"

"Again it is undisputed that no body knows, Every department of management, however, is now devoting its best efforts to that end."

"How can post-war contracts be obtained? We are optimistic in the belief that if common sense and good judgment are exercised by all parties involved, we can get our share and more of business, and attain levels of peacetime business beyond any previous peacetime record of the company. To get this business in preference to our competitors, including all of the large companies in the brass industry, we must be able to sell goods of equal or better quality at the same or lower price. We think these facts are undisputed also."
"Can it be questioned that prices are dependent upon costs? We all know that the government has permitted no increase in the selling price of our products from 1941 to date. We are still compelled to sell at 1941 prices despite substantial wartime increases in all elements of cost."
"Realizing all business difficulties, we are nevertheless confident that the company can maintain or improve its place in the brass industry if given a fair chance. The next 3 or 4 months are months of uncertainties—uncertainties as to costs, as to prices, as to production, and as to business in general. The greatest concern to the company and to its employees is that the epidemic of strikes now sweeping the country might unnecessarily strike down our company, lose our customers and impair, if not destroy, our ability to provide jobs."

Riggins points out that "there

has never been a strike in this company" over such matters as "union contracts or wages." "They have always been settled by the common sense method of collective bargaining, with the aid, where necessary, of the War Labor Board, and we believe we can jointly continue to settle these matters by the same methods."
Neither should there be strikes over grievances, Riggins maintains, as "the company has been willing and offers to submit to fair and impartial arbitration any pending disputes over disciplinary action."
"Can any fair minded person say that this is not a proper way to settle such matters, rather than by engaging in an economic war, which like all wars, results in a loss to both parties?"

"That the present post-war period is one of widespread confusion is evident to any observer."
Some of the self-evident truths which must include the following:

First, war is an economic paradox in that it creates false and artificial scarcities, rather than true and natural prosperity. To safeguard the people from enslavement by avaricious government takes over all production for war needs. Payrolls are financed largely by adding to the national indebtedness—borrowing from the future.

Second, real prosperity is brought about only by a natural increase of production due to greater industrial efficiency—machines and men. This prosperity is measured, not in terms of money, but in an abundance of goods with which to gratify wants of the people.

Third, consuming power ultimately comes from production. In the long run, increased production means increased consumption.

The military war is over. If we are to attain prosperity without bankrupting ourselves by disastrous indebtedness and costly inflation, we must return to the fundamental A-B-Cs of economics.

The F. L. Riggins route is one of plain, old-fashioned common sense—the road to prosperity through a cooperative partnership of management and worker whereby differences are settled by collective bargaining and impartial arbitration.

To which voice would you be willing to listen and follow?
At this period of our journey down the path from war to peace, we come to the end of a false prosperity that was made possible not by consumer purchases but by adding 270 BILLIONS to our indebtedness—by borrowing from ourselves.

Surely now, if ever, is the time when we should think before we act.

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STATE OF MICHIGAN.—The Probate Court for the County of Oakland.
At a session of said Court, held at the Probate Office in the City of Pontiac, Michigan, on the 10th day of October, A.D. 1945.
Present: Hon. Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.
In the Matter of the Estate of James A. Dant, Deceased.
Sarah T. Dant and Vivian Dant Snyder, executrices of said estate, having filed in said court a petition praying that the time for the presentation of claims against said estate be limited and that a time and place be appointed to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands against said deceased and before said court.

It is Ordered, That two months from and after the date of this order, no claim against said estate be presented to the Probate Office, but is hereby appointed for the examination and adjustment of all claims against said deceased.

ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate.
Dennis Boyle, Atty. 26-31-32.
721 Pembroke Bldg.

STATE OF MICHIGAN.—The Probate Court for the County of Oakland.
At a session of said Court, held at the Probate Office in the City of Pontiac, Michigan, on the 10th day of October, A.D. 1945.
Present: Hon. Arthur E. Moore, Judge of Probate.
In the Matter of the Estate of James H. Hamilton, Deceased.
John E. Martin, executor of said estate, having filed in said court a petition praying that the time for the presentation of claims against said estate be limited and that a time and place be appointed to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands against said deceased and before said court.

It is Further Ordered, That the 7th day of January, 1946, at 9 o'clock in the forenoon, at said Probate Office, be and is hereby appointed for the examination and adjustment of all claims against said deceased.

ARTHUR E. MOORE, Judge of Probate.
John E. Martin, Atty. 26-31-32.
721 Pembroke Bldg.
Detroit 24, Mich.

Riggins points out that "there

OPEN WIDE YOUR DOOR AND POCKETBOOK TO THE



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THERE'S STILL A BIG JOB AHEAD!

THEY'RE on the march—the Victory Volunteers of your community! They're making their important rounds *right now* in support of AMERICA'S GREAT VICTORY LOAN.

Give them a rousing welcome in the form they'll appreciate most—your order for your full share of the Giant Victory Loan quota.

The war may be over, but there's a tremendous job still ahead. Hundreds of thousands of our wounded fighting men must be cared for—nursed from battle wounds to health.

Sons, husbands and fathers all over the world must be brought home safely—and quickly. Yes, the job ahead is big—and costly. AMERICA'S GREAT VICTORY LOAN quota is \$11,000,000,000.

When your neighborhood Victory Volunteer calls, open wide your door and pocketbook. The most important Bonds you've ever bought are the Bonds you buy today in America's Great Victory Loan!



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