

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
BUREAU OF MOTION PICTURES
HOLLYWOOD OFFICE

NOTE: The following information is being sent to you as a supplement to the War Information Manual. Its purpose is to give further amplification to the Government's war program, and to provide material for short subjects and feature pictures. If more detailed information on the subject is desired, it will be furnished to you, on request, by the Office of War Information. Should you wish to use this material in your short subject or feature program, kindly communicate with this office in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

VICTORY COMMITTEES

THE PROBLEM: ENLISTING AMERICA'S TOTAL ENERGY, SKILL AND INVENTIVENESS
IN THE WAR OF PRODUCTION

How can industries tap the vast reservoir of ideas and special skills that have not yet been drawn into the production stream?

What is the best method of implementing sincere, wholehearted cooperation between patriotic labor and management toward the single goal of speeding production of war materials?

These crucial problems confronted the War Labor Board when, at the beginning of the year, it launched an all-out drive to increase America's war production.

American industry has tackled the greatest job in its dynamic history. There has never been any question of its potential ability to make good. The only question has been one of making good within the limited amount of time allotted. War does not wait. Battles cannot be

postponed. Victory goes to the side that strikes first - with the most weapons - of the best quality.

America's greatness is more than its heritage of freedom, more than its immense wealth. America is great, too, by reason of the resourcefulness, the mechanical "savvy", of its workers. The workers of America have always had the skill and the incentive to create, to find short-cuts, to make things faster and better than anyone else.

Today, with the nation fighting for its existence, the incentive factor operates stronger than ever before. Today there is more need than ever before to utilize the mechanical "savvy" of our workers.

The problem boils down to this: What is the most practicable means for workers to communicate their limitless fund of ideas and make available their skills and inventiveness to the managers operating war industries?

THE ANSWER: LABOR-MANAGEMENT ("VICTORY") COMMITTEES

About five months ago Donald Nelson, head of the War Production Board, urged the establishment of joint Labor-Management Committees to speed production. At first labor was suspicious, management alarmed. Did this mean curtailment of labor's freedom? Did it mean dictation to management by labor? With some apprehension, and not a little reluctance, a few factories set up such committees.

The results were electrifying. There was an immediate feeling of unanimity. Representatives from labor and management discovered that they were all shooting at the same target, that the only question was how

to shoot faster and more accurately. Production had to be accelerated. Nothing else mattered. There was a job to be done, and this was the democratic way of doing it.

It was not long before Labor-Management Committees came to be known, justifiably, as Victory Committees. They were winning the war of production.

HOW A VICTORY COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

Let's take a composite war production plant and call it the Smith Factory. Upon the organization of the Smith Victory Committee, individuals and sub-committees are appointed to increase plant efficiency by attacking such problems as preventing accidents, reducing waste, breaking production bottlenecks, and making full use of every machine.

In order to stimulate worker enthusiasm, a slogan contest is inaugurated, and arrangements are made for posters and production charts. Prizes are offered for the best slogans. The theme: "We're All in This Fight!" "It's Up to the Three of Us - You - Me and the Machine!" Slogans become posters which are spotted throughout the plant. A gigantic production chart shows every worker what the plant production quota is, what has been accomplished so far, and what remains to be done. Each unit and each shift has its own production chart, its own constant reminder that no one's effort or output can slacken for a moment.

Simultaneously a drive is launched for suggestions to speed production by increased efficiency or by reduced waste of time or materials. A contest is organized; suggestions are received by the Victory Committee.

Perhaps three-fourths of them are impractical for one reason or another. But the rest really count. The Smith Victory Committee culls out the useless ideas. The Smith management puts the good ones into effect.

All suggestions which may be applicable to related industries are sent by the Smith Victory Committee to the War Production Board in Washington. The WPB serves as a kind of national clearing house for ideas to speed and improve production. Such ideas, having been tested and found practicable, are made available to every factory in the country.

AN OBJECTIVE APPRAISAL OF VICTORY COMMITTEES

A few weeks ago a leading trade journal in the industrial field conducted a survey in 88 plants from among the first 300 to form Victory Committees. The results of the survey indicate conclusively that the plan has been a tremendous aid in attaining maximum war production. Starting with posters, suggestion systems and contests, nearly every plant reported a decided increase in worker enthusiasm, a great new flow of useful ideas from the men who operate the machines and build the implements of war.

The results of the survey indicate, too, that neither labor nor management has attempted to use the Committees to its own advantage at the expense of the other party to the agreement. The overwhelming majority of firms establishing Victory Committees have reported that labor-management relations have improved since the Committees were inaugurated.

WHAT VICTORY COMMITTEES HAVE DONE

Today more than 1000 plants, having a combined total of better than 2,000,000 workers, have established Victory Committees. Their coverage

ranges all the way from 200,000 at Bethlehem Steel to 10 or 20 at small sub-contracting plants. Reports to WPB indicate that hundreds more Committees are in the making. The plan is sweeping the country - because it has made good.

- (1) Westinghouse Electric's Victory Committee at the Cleveland plant boosted production 17% in the first month of its existence. At the Pittsburgh plant one out of every ten worker suggestions was put into effect. All Westinghouse plants have organized workers into production teams, which compete against each other for the honor of being furthest ahead of schedule.
- (2) A production drive instituted by the Republic Steel Victory Committee in March resulted in an all-time world's record for iron production, the record being made by the company's Trumbull Cliffs blast furnace.
- (3) In order to stimulate production of steel castings for medium tanks, the Symington-Gould Victory Committee arranged to have a completed tank driven through the plant. Workers were given tangible evidence of the importance of their work. From then on, posters, suggestion boxes and production charts had a real significance.
- (4) Oldsmobile's Victory Committee has installed lunch-

room bulletin boards which carry news flashes and keep workers up to the minute on the war.

- (5) The Willard Battery Victory Committee, like those in dozens of other plants, has inaugurated a car-pooling program to save workers' tires. Posters have emphasized that it is unpatriotic to drive to work alone.
- (6) The DuPont Victory Committee at the Newport plant conducted a salvage campaign to collect all material that could be reclaimed and which ordinarily was thrown away. Hundreds of dollars worth of material was saved at a cost of only a few dollars for sorting. A similar campaign, conducted by the Westinghouse Victory Committee in Springfield, netted 350,000 pounds of steel - enough to build 9 tanks.
- (7) Worker suggestions by the thousands have saved time, improved quality, and conserved scarce materials. A worker in the Four Wheel Drive Company devised a method of tool grinding that increased production 50% and saved vital materials. A machinist in the Atkins & Company plant contributed a suggestion that cut saw breakage more than 80%. A woman worker in the Douglas Aircraft lacquer department suggested a new technique

that saved 90 woman-hours a day.

These examples, some small, some tremendous in scope, are typical of the operation of Victory Committees wherever they have been established. They are manifestations of America's all-out war effort.

DRAMATIZING THE VICTORY COMMITTEE

Sam Johnson operates a drilling machine in the Smith Factory. Sam is just an average American, has a wife and two kids and a small home. Perhaps he couldn't define what is known as the American Way of Life, but he knows that his right to believe and say and do what he wants is threatened today. He knows these things are worth fighting for. When he sees a big poster on the wall of the factory urging him to "Speed the Wheels to Beat the Heels", he knows who the Heels are, what they stand for, and what they aim to do to his way of life.

Several million of Sam's countrymen and Allies are on the fighting line to see that he doesn't get kicked around. So Sam's one idea right now is to back up his countrymen and Allies, to see that they get all the guns they can use - and in a hurry. Sam is no mechanical genius. He'll never run a plant or make a million dollars. But he knows his machine. He knows every part of it, and he's proud of his knowledge. He's proud of the skill of his hands, skill he's spent a long time acquiring.

It takes Sam twenty minutes to complete a drilling operation. It would take less time if he didn't have to stop every so often to check the sharpness of the drill and the precision of the cut. That's

time thrown away. One less gun per day in the hands of the boys at the front. Why not install a gadget to indicate when pressure against the drill was increasing, showing that the tool should be replaced?

Sam thinks his idea over, writes it down on a prepared form and drops it into a suggestion box. It is brought up and discussed by labor and management representatives at the next meeting of the Victory Committee. Plant engineers are consulted. The idea sounds feasible. A gadget is designed and installed on Sam's machine. Now a drilling operation takes eleven minutes instead of twenty. That's a saving of only nine minutes. But when you multiply Sam Johnson a million times ... a million times nine minutes ... that adds up to a lot of guns.

Multiplying Sam Johnson a million times is a conservative estimate. Sam Johnson is the whole production front today. He and his boss are partners in the gigantic undertaking of our-producing the enemy. They are collaborating to make every minute count, to "Speed the Wheels to Beat the Heels". That's why Sam and the boss are getting together. That's why they call their get-together a Victory Committee.