

IV.

WORK AND PRODUCTIONTHE WAR AT HOMEHOW EACH OF US CAN FIGHT

We must dramatize the tremendous task of equipping ourselves and our Allies for war. Only if the people understand the magnitude of this job can we expect total effort to achieve total victory and total peace.

1. The Job. We have set ourselves a tremendous goal: to outproduce the Axis whose entire economy has been geared to war production for almost a decade. We have only begun to produce tanks, planes, guns. But we have laid the foundations for expansion of our war industries, and war materials are beginning to roll from our production lines. The implements of war must be produced in increasing volume to attain the gigantic goals which will insure victory.

I set certain definite goals of production. The Axis propagandists called them fantastic....The goals will be attained.

--President Roosevelt, Radio Address,
February 23, 1942.

2. The Men and Women on the Job. The soldier in overalls is vital to the prosecution of modern warfare. By working harder, by conserving materials, by devising new and better ways to do his job, he has taken his battle station on the production front.

American workers, brace your backs and speed your hands so that the deadly guns of MacArthur may multiply, that the flashing planes of the Fighting Tigers may cloud the skies and the tough tanks of the Russians and Libyen may cover the earth. Your fellow Americans and your comrades in arms on key battlefields around the globe send out their earnest plea and reach forth their eager hands for these weapons. For them they mean death or victory; for you they mean slavery or liberty.

--Paul V. McNutt, Broadcast over a
Nation-wide Network of NBC,
February 9, 1942.

3. Time: The Most Precious Raw Material. The one thing we cannot make or buy or substitute for -- is Time. Time is the vital element in the production of each gun, tank, and plane.

There must be speed in converting all our factories, all our equipment, all our people, into the war effort.

There must be no idle machinery, no idle men. A factory half idle is a factory half bombed.

Never before have we been called upon for such a prodigious effort. Never before have we had so little time in which to do so much.

--President Roosevelt, Radio Address,
February 23, 1942.

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Broadcast, February 9, 1942.

Here are some specific suggestions about the production front which might be dramatized:

A) Hitler said, "Democracy is decadent." He told the world that the democracies were soft and could not pull together and fight. Look at the record. A year ago we were an easy-going people turning out electric refrigerators and hair pins. All within the democratic process we have rapidly converted and expanded our industrial machine to supply our war demands. We have foreseen the serious shortage in manpower and have taken steps to train new workers, to send workers where they are most needed, and to place them in the job where they will make the greatest contribution to the total war effort. Of course we had our differences on how this should be done, but we argued it out in the democratic way. Let us take pride in the way our democracy went into action when the test came.

In brief, the civilian man power needs include stretching the number in the labor force as far as possible, discovering the right place for the service of every person, training so that their service will be of highest quality and promoting health and vigor so that the work will be done with the maximum efficiency. We must press unceasingly toward these goals as the number in war production continually expands. If we do that, the foe will feel the impact of the power of 130,000,000 united Americans--not just the blows of the military forces.

--Paul V. McNutt, NBC Nation-wide
Broadcast, February 9, 1942.

B) A few weeks ago, in Pittsburgh, the A. F. of L. and C. I. O. buried the hatchet. Labor is united today. Labor and management must also pull together as one team. Past grievances must be forgotten in the urgent necessity to present a solid, militant front against the common enemy. A progressive step in this direction has been the establishment in some industries of joint management-labor committees to consult on problems of production.

In some ways you of organized labor have more at stake in this war than any other people in America. What's the first thing that happens when the Nazis march into any country? They lock up the labor leaders and take over the unions. There is nothing in the world that could happen which would be as completely fatal to organized labor in this country as defeat in this war.

--Donald M. Nelson, Chairman of WPB,
Address to C.I.O. leaders, March 23, 1942.

C) The production line and the battle front are closely linked. The man on the production line must be made to understand that without him the army cannot fight. That tank in Detroit will in a few weeks fight Nazis on the Russian front. That plane from San Diego is now locked in a death grip with Zero fighters over Japan. Delay or carelessness on the production line in Kansas City may cost the life of an American boy in Australia.

We are calling for new plants and additions to old plants and for plant conversion

to war needs. We are seeking more men and more women to run them. We are working longer hours. We are coming to realize that one extra plane or extra tank or extra gun or extra ship completed tomorrow may, in a few months, turn the tide on some distant battlefield; it may make the difference between life and death for some of our fighting men.

--President Roosevelt, Radio Address,
February 23, 1942.

D) The agricultural front is important. It is still true that an army travels on its stomach. The farmer who fills the world's bread-basket is also a soldier. Upon him, when victory is won, will rest the responsibility of feeding the starved millions of Europe and Asia.

Farmers will feed the men and women who are turning out war materials, and all of the Nation's families who are carrying the heavy loads of wartime. They will keep on building up food reserves, too, for the conquered nations when they have thrown Hitler out.

--Claude R. Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture,
Radio Address, April 28, 1942.

And the problem confronting the farmer today is not one simply of increased production. There is a vast over-supply of certain crops and a desperate shortage of others. The immediate problem is one of conversion of land to crops that are needed -- with the minimum cost in soil destruction.

E) Who is the production worker? He is one of us, multiplied millions of times. He is old and young and middle-aged. He is a Chinaman, a Negro, a Greek, a Pole; a native of New York and Pittsburgh and San Francisco; a man from the grain belt, the mountains, the slums, from Park Avenue. He is the American who believes he has a right to say what he wants to say, do what he wants to do, worship God as he chooses, and live the kind of life he wants to lead. This is the man in the factory, the field and the mine. He is supplying the weapons to win the war, so he is a man we want to know. We want to see him in action, in the factory, the field and the mine. We want to see him on the street and at home, going through his daily routine, talking things over with his pals, his wife or his girl. We want to hear what his ideas are, what he thinks about his job, his country, and his way of life. We want to know all about him, because we are that man.

America is its men and its women, and
the Nation is no stronger than their
combined power.

--Paul V. McNutt, NBC Nation-wide
Broadcast, February 9, 1942.