

HOUSING SHORTAGE

Profit System Fails To Provide Adequate Housing

New York. (FP) — The housing situation is "probably worse" than it was a year ago, a survey by the Family Service Association of America revealed here.

Despite the building of 900,000 dwelling units in 1948, the study said, "normal population growth and the present rate of new marriages have outstripped housing built a year ago. . . . Millions of Americans are still unable to find simple, uncramped and clean shelter within the limits of their purchasing power."

One hundred and thirty-five Family Service agencies in 31 states, Canada and Hawaii took part in the survey, which charged that the housing shortage is responsible for breakdowns in family life. Many husbands and wives, it was reported, are temporarily living apart because of inadequate housing.

'Call Stalin's Bluff' Says Secretary of Socialist Party

"Call Stalin's bluff" was the advice given to President Harry S. Truman by Harry Fleischman, national secretary of the Socialist Party.

The Socialist official declared that "Stalin's announced willingness to meet with President Truman at some acceptable place to discuss a peace pact is one more shot in the current Russian peace offensive."

"If President Truman just dismisses it as another 'phony offer' by Russia, he will be playing into the hands of Stalin's propagandists throughout the world, who will seize upon that to 'prove' that the United States does not want peace."

"The President, after consultation with the Western democratic nations and the United Nations, should call Stalin's bluff. Mr. Truman should agree to meet with Stalin — perhaps in Berlin, prime victim of the cold war — but he should be prepared to drive a hard bargain for humanity and world peace."

"To Mr. Stalin's announced willingness to join with the U.S. in measures leading to 'gradual disarmament', Mr. Truman should counter with willingness to join with the United States in measures leading to 'gradual disarmament', a proposal for: (1) the immediate lifting of the Berlin blockade as a prelude to a full settlement of the German problem; (2) the abolition of the veto power in the United Nations Security Council; (3) universal disarmament of all weapons, including the atomic bomb, under international inspection and control."

"Should Stalin refuse to accept these conditions, he will convict himself, and the Communist-controlled nations, of hypocrisy and unwillingness to accept a real peace. His 'peace offensive' will have boomeranged against him in the minds and hearts of the people of the world."

"If Stalin accepts, we will have provided the climate in which the world may secure peaceful solution of the grave conflicts which are inevitable, but must be transferred from the realm of war if civilization is to survive in this atomic age."

— Reading Labor Advocate.

CASTE SYSTEM

At a troop transit base on the Suez, there are ten (10) lavatories marked as follows:

- Officers, European
- Officers, Asiatic
- Officers, Colored
- Warrant Officers and Sergeants European
- W.O.S., Asiatic
- W.O.S., Colored
- Other Ranks, European
- Other Ranks, Asiatic
- Other Ranks, Colored
- The 10th was for W.A.Cs.

LITTLE LUTHER

By JOHN PAINE

"You can say what you will about big business, Luther, but you can't deny that when it comes to the latest things, big business has the know-how," remarked Mr. Dilworth, the Dimity Diaper czar and homespun philosopher.

"Pop, you're in rare form," yelled Luther. "What you just said had absolutely no meaning. Keep talking. I'm sure this will grow into a splendid conversation."

"Luther, your attitude annoys me. A few more cracks like that and I'll send you to bed with a fat lip. What I'm talking about is the latest advances of science. Like, for instance, at a recent General Electric science forum, a skin doctor said you can tell what a man does for a living just by looking at him."

"Keep talking, Pop."

"Thank you. This man said you can tell a baker by the pimples on his thighs. You see, he leans against a bench and the friction produces pimples on his thighs. Isn't that remarkable?"

"Keep talking, Pop."

"Thank you. This man also said you can sometimes tell a man's occupation by his odor. In that connection he mentioned bartenders, incinerator workers, ash collectors, sauerkraut packers, fertilizer workers, hostlers and dishwashers. Isn't that remarkable, Luther?"

"It certainly is, Pop! Who in the world would have dreamed that a sauerkraut worker would smell of sauerkraut? Why, only the other day I was thinking to myself about sauerkraut workers and how to recognize one when I saw one. It never occurred to me that all I have to do is sniff around and when I smell sauerkraut, I have my man!"

"Yes, Luther. Never let us think that science is asleep. Do you know what else this man said?"

"Tell me, Pop — I can hardly wait!"

"This man said you can tell a shoeshiner by his nails, which will be stained black!"

"Suppose he's been shining brown shoes, Pop?"

"I don't know, my boy. That's an interesting question. Maybe they haven't worked that out yet."

"Pop, suppose a man came to you and asked for a job as a personnel director. How would you apply your new knowledge?"

"I'm glad you asked, Luther. I would look carefully at the man to see if he looked like a personnel director."

"How does a personnel director look, Pop?"

"Luther, a personnel director looks like, er, well—he looks very much like you'd expect a personnel director to look!"

"Go to the foot of the class, Pop. You failed miserably. You forgot the sure-fire method of telling an experienced personnel director."

"How, Luther?"

"In common with sauerkraut workers, Pop, personnel directors are identifiable by their smell!"

"Luther, let's leave Taft-Hartley out of this, please."

"Very well, Pop. Now let's see if you can tell me how to identify a majority stockholder. Go ahead."

"Well, Luther, I'd look to see if he looked like a majority stockholder."

"I can see you still haven't learned your lesson, Pop. Listen. Remember the baker, who had pimples on his thighs from working?"

"Yes."

"Majority stockholders also have pimples, from sitting."

"Watch your language, Luther!"

"One more question, Pop. How would you know someone wanted to buy Dimity Diapers to sell in his store?"

"First, I'd look at his hands."

"Fooey, Pop. You never learn. You know what I'd do?"

"What?"

"I'd just ask him."

"That's not a bad idea, Luther."

"Science never sleeps, Pop."

"Keep talking, Pop."

"Thank you. This man also said you can sometimes tell a man's occupation by his odor. In that connection he mentioned bartenders, incinerator workers, ash collectors, sauerkraut packers, fertilizer workers, hostlers and dishwashers. Isn't that remarkable, Luther?"

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PHONEY BALONEY

ARMOUR COMPANY VIOLATES HEALTH LAWS

Although it's been frontpaged in Detroit newspapers, the press of most other Michigan cities and the rest of the 47 states have suppressed a story from the Michigan Dept. of Agriculture threatening to revoke the license of Armour & Co., one of the "Big Four" meat packers, to make and sell sausages because of its continuous violation of health laws.

The company has been convicted 29 times since 1941 of violating Michigan's food laws. This included eight convictions last year, as well as other convictions for selling inedible eggs, misbranding products, and short-weighting customers.

The company, which is also among the top two violators of the Federal anti-trust laws, has been indicted for 13 criminal violations. It was notified Jan. 10 that the state intends to revoke its sausage license because of its refusal to comply with food laws. Among the charges to which the firm has already pleaded guilty are selling sausage containing pig's lips and stomachs. Should Armour's license be revoked at a hearing Jan. 31, it will bar the future sale of such sausage products as frankfurters, bologna, knackwurst, salami, New York ham, Polish sausage and breakfast sausage.

The 47-state press silence in this case becomes understandable in view of Armour's advertising expenditures. In 1947, the last year available, the company spent \$2,961,991 for space in newspapers, magazines and radio time.

COAL MINERS

Private Ownership of Mechanical Loader Worries Coal Diggers

Pittsburgh, Pa. (FP) — The specter of the continuous Joy loader, with its attendant unemployment possibilities, hangs like the sword of Damocles over the nation's 380,000 coal miners.

The threat it hangs by hasn't parted yet. Maybe it won't break for a long time. But the threat to the miners of such technological advances represented by the new \$45,000 25-foot long machine sends a shudder down their spines every now and then.

Don't get the idea that the miners and their leaders in the United Mine Workers are opposed to progress in the development and use of these labor-saving devices. They're for them. They know any such opposition would be both futile and foolish. Only they don't want to be left out when the benefits, social and financial, but especially financial, are passed around.

STOCKPILES COME FIRST

Says Donald F. Carpenter, chairman of the National Military Establishment's Munitions Board and director of stockpiling under the Strategic and Critical Materials Stockpiling Act of 1946:

"In the earlier phases of stockpiling, the policy followed was that purchases were to be made only where they would not conflict with civilian demands. Under the new policy, this limitation is no longer effective."

The act provides that such purchases "shall be made, so far as is practical, from supplies of materials in excess of the current industrial demand." So evidently the stockpilers don't figure it practical to take up only the surplus, even though some phases of unemployment are derived from shortage of materials, as aluminum, electric power, copper. . . . It might be that the passage of a quarter of the human race in China under the domination of the communist power has something to do with this decision.

Remember there's blue sky behind the blackest cloud.

WHY HE ESCAPED

G-Man: "Got away, he did? Did you guard all the exits?"

Policeman: "Yes, but we think he must have left by one of the entrances."

It is better to be alone than in bad company.

THE MARCH OF LABOR



Layoffs Look Phony

A Depression Is Not Necessary

Some say it's not a depression. To the man who has been laid off, it looks exactly like one. But there are some strange looking features on it this time.

There isn't too much of EVERYTHING. There are shortages of aluminum, of steel, of copper and zinc; and some of this is blamed on a shortage of electric power.

Some of the lay-offs have a very phoney look. Public utility companies with expansion programs, under way, with material on hand, and work to do, laid off substantial numbers. Seamen are on the beach, while food and coal that was to have been shipped to Europe remains here, for a shortage of vessels, while 20 times as many vessels as were needed to ship the unshipped food lie in the boneyard.

The evidence of depression showed up first in such industries as textiles, furniture, etc., some of it a year ago.

Add that up. Some of it adds up easier if we remember:

There is supposed to be an argument for a fourth-round wage increase right now, and the appearance of depression beats saying "NO" at the conference table;

Congress is considering budgets and taxes now, and the big boys would like to see you taxed more and them taxed less, and they argue that bigger taxes make depression.

These considerations can help explain some of it, but they won't explain all of it. It won't for instance why signs of "over-production" and depression hit some consumer goods lines a long time ago. While much of the evidence points to a deliberate policy of forcing depression, this would seem to be playing with fire at a time when a fourth of the human race is slipping under the Communist yoke in China, when the retailers are trying to sell Free Enterprise in the stores, and General Electric is trying to sell the superiority of this "American" system with ads in Europe.

"Fortune" magazine, protesting the idea of higher taxes, advertises in the papers "even the U. S. can't afford a depression"; and no doubt it means "afford" less in the bookkeeping sense than in the sense of a world struggle for power. The malignant minority that runs capitalist society is not however altogether averse to playing with such fire; it seeks sanction and interests and gains rather than collective stability; it has been short-sighted enough to generate Mussolini, Hitler and Franco; and in its family circles there have been prolonged discussions as to whether workers are kept in line best by feeding them to the point of contentment or by keeping them up against it and grateful for a job, and fearful of any sort of change.

Again, as far as the business system can be said to have a 'normal' condition, it is that of 'slack times.' It finds "full employment" indigestible.

High Taxes and Low Living

The enactment of Truman's record peacetime budget of close to \$42 billion must—simply must—keep American living standards at a lower-than-necessary level.

We say this because the money to be raised so not to be used chiefly for social services.

About half of the sum is to be spent for further prosecution of the "cold war" that is now being waged against Soviet Russia in Europe and Asia. Other significant sums are to be spent for the maintenance and enlargement of a huge peacetime military machine for possible use when the "cold" war gets hot.

Up to this point we have not been speaking in terms of sociology. Our warning is based entirely on pure arithmetic. We can't waste the labor of our people, the resources of our land and the products of our industries and still have plenty for ourselves.

Perhaps it is necessary to our very salvation that we block Russia now and prepare to fight her later on. But if that necessity is a fact, it is largely because the United States has held fast to the capitalist profit system for so long—and partly because it is our official purpose to keep on holding fast to it.

Well, getting back to arithmetic, we warn our readers that they must be prepared to accept lower living standards here at home to balance off every increase in taxes for military purposes. They may not like to know that, but it is true.

Also they must expect to submit to new and ever-increasing controls as the economy is dedicated to militarism and as deficit spending increases the national debt.

We expect that there will be plenty of gripes about living conditions and wages in the future—as there have been in the past. But however much we like cake, it is a sad fact that we can't eat it and have it too. Neither can we enjoy abundance and peace while we are spending so large a part of the national income for conflict and war.

It is well to know that militarism and debt have been the final phases of by-gone civilizations. And with this in mind, we grow uneasy when we see American capitalism continuing peacetime conscription on the one hand and deficit spending on the other.

—Reading Labor Advocate.

DISTORTED FIGURES

Newspapers Blow Up Sag in Prices; Cry For Pay Cuts

On the basis of little more than a hairline drop in living costs, newspapers this week launched a nationwide drive to block wage increases and even to encourage wage cuts.

All sorts of "phony" headlines and stories were carried, all designed to make it appear that the cost of living had taken a big tumble.

The "Washington Post," owned by the multi-millionaire Eugene Meyer, former "big shot" on Wall Street, furnishes a first-class example of this propaganda campaign.

One day it carried a headline reading: "Wage decline seen as costs continue to drop."

A smaller sub-head read "Price Index Goes Down Three Tenths of One Per Cent" and then "Pay Cuts in Prospect."

WHAT AN ALIBI FOR WAGE CUTS!

In other words, on the basis of a three-tenths of one per cent slip in a price index, the paper starts a hula-baloo for slashing wages!

By contrast, neither the 'Post' nor any other newspaper launched any move for wage increases after the war when prices were zooming by five, 10 and 25 per cent a throw.

The same "Washington Post" a day earlier ran a front-page headline declaring "Poultry Prices Decline Here to Lowest Level Since OPA." Other papers published similar stories about various products.

MORE EXAMPLES OF DISTORTION

That's outright distortion. What happened was that poultry and a few other items slipped back to the level of October 1946, when price control was "officially" abandoned. For all practical purposes, however, O. P. A. was killed in June, 1946, when Congress balked at renewing the controls.

Prices of foods shot up 25 to 30 per cent in the following 30 days, and some articles as much as 50 per cent, before Congress enacted weak, new controls. These were finally dropped in October when they proved completely ineffective to halt the steady rise in prices.

Thus, a fair comparison would relate present prices to those of June, 1946. But no newspaper did that.—Labor.

Ain't It Wonderful?

THE MACHINE

The machine is a wonderful invention. It can do everything—but think. It's just like a human.

The machine no longer needs anyone to watch it working. It has been converted to Stakhanovism in Russia, to the Bedaux system in Germany and to the idea of Labor-Management Co-operation in the United States. It works for nothing, for fun, or just for the hell of it. It's just like a human.

The machine has no name, but it has a number. Its number is stamped on its back side, and is with it all the days of its work life. Not having to think, the machine does not have to know its number nor does it have to know why it carries it. Its number gives it "security", social security, and it knows that when it is worn out with working, or when the factory closes down, some nice little lady from the front office will come around and give it a little oil, a little grease and maybe, a song and dance. It's just like a human.

Having no brains, the machine will willingly help to make tools to destroy itself. It will help in the making of hammers by which it can be bludgeoned, saws by which it can be cut in pieces, gimmicks from which it can get a belly ache and having made these things, will suffer in silence, knowing nothing when they are used for the purpose for which they have been designed. It's just like a human.

Being busy, the machine will hum like a baby in its bath, purr like a cat having its belly scratched, or roar like a politician saving his country. Unemployed, the machine

BUSINESS 'ADS'

ADMIT FABULOUS PROFITS

The McGraw-Hill Company, which calls itself "headquarters for business information," and publishes a score of business magazines, this week paid for full-page newspaper advertisement predicting "American industry will spend about \$55 billion for new plants and equipment in the next five years."

We hope industry will expand and grow stronger, but, upon careful reading, this expensive "ad" turns out to be an argument that the billions for expansion must be provided in three ways:

First, workers must refrain from asking wage increases. Second, Congress should hold down taxes on corporation profits, "to give businessmen confidence and incentive." Third, taxes, on corporations should be further reduced by giving them larger "depreciation allowances."

In the face of that argument, McGraw-Hill makes one extremely significant admission. It is this:

Of all industrial companies, 76 per cent expect to get their expansion money out of profits. The other 24 per cent expect to get the money from profits, plus sale of new stock.

Thus profits will furnish most of the \$55 billion. That's a staggering sum. It is 57 per cent of the \$96 billion which, McGraw-Hill says, is the entire value of all present "manufacturing facilities" in the country.

Industrialists must be prospering fabulously in these post-war years, or they could not spend that huge sum out of profits, after paying dividends to stockholders.

Incidentally, McGraw-Hill itself must be "rolling in money." This particular "ad" is "the 72nd of a series." Such "ads" cost big money. How many millions went into the series?

A Federal law says corporations shall not contribute to political campaign funds. The purpose of that is to keep corporate wealth from influencing legislation.

Of course, the law is evaded, but "ads" like McGraw-Hill's are an open, brazen attempt to influence legislation. May a corporation do indirectly what it's forbidden to do directly?

—Labor.

A Gold-Trimmed Yacht to Fight for

"A gold-trimmed, 195-foot yacht is on the way to the Sheikh of Kuwait," says a report from Long Beach, California. "A million dollars was spent in refitting the yacht, and two gold-trimmed motor launches go with it."

"A group of American oil companies are giving the luxurious ship to the Sheikh because he is permitting them to drill for oil in his small Arabian country on the Persian Gulf."

That story sounds humorous, but it has a serious side. It means that American boys may be sent some day to fight and die for that gold-plated yacht and oil company "concessions" in Kuwait, a land of which few Americans have ever heard.

is silent and uncomplaining, making no noise to disturb the slumbers of its owners, no trouble to upset their schemes for its own indolence. It's just like a human.

The machine is made by one man, used, by other men, and profited by men who neither make it, operate it, or know of its existence. It's just like a human.

The machine is a rugged individualist. It co-ordinates the functions of its own body but doesn't know how to co-ordinate the functions of the machines on the assembly line of which it is an important factor. It will suffer itself to be co-ordinated, and having been "organized" it will know nothing either of the process or purpose of the organization. It's just like a human.

And so — we have a Machine Civilization in a Machine Age.

—Industrial Worker.