

Address to be delivered by Honorable John E. Fogarty, Member of Congress from the Rhode Island Second Congressional District, at the New England Conference of Machinists Assembly, Central High School Auditorium, Providence, Rhode Island, on Sunday afternoon, March 25, 1945, at 1:30 P.M.

It appears that every time a speaker addresses a gathering - he starts out by saying this is the most critical period we have ever faced. This has been particularly true in recent years - and in most cases there has been ample justification for such statements on the part of speakers.

I don't want to run the risk of having you think I am following the usual pattern, for the want of something better to say, but I can't avoid calling your attention to the fact that the signs all point to an ever-increasing tension.

In this year 1945, we face the end of the war in Europe. We can't avoid a thrilling feeling of enthusiasm and optimism when we contemplate that prospect. But it is less than decent if we allow that feeling of enthusiasm and optimism to overshadow our knowledge that minute after minute American boys are dying to make that victory possible.

With the demoralization and collapse of the German fighting machine, there will come a great many problems which must be faced. They will be problems that will absorb the individual's thinking, and they may tempt us to disregard to some extent the battle that rages in the far Pacific. That battle is far from won. There the nation faces a fanatical foe who knows full well that it is running the risk of complete obliteration. It will fight to the bitter end, in the hope that a disinterested public here at home will force upon our leaders a peace that is less than total victory.

Because these things are so - and there is no sense in ducking the facts - we must strive to make ourselves a little sterner in our attitude toward the future.

Although we know our Nation is heavily endowed with human and material resources, a complete victory over our enemies cannot come alone through the ability to fight better than the foe - to out-produce our enemy in the material needed for war. There must also be that fire of perseverance which springs from the soul. There must be the intense determination to endure the trials and tribulations that come, in ever-increasing number, as the war years drag on.

With Pearl Harbor, this Nation we love so much, was swept with a fire of determination that stunned our enemies on both sides of the world. The unity with which this great people faced battle to the end was instantaneous, it was almost terrifying. That was over three years ago. During the passage of the many months, as the needs of war gobbled up ever-increasing amounts of food, clothing, material of all sorts - as more and more of the cream of America's youth sailed for foreign shores - the strain grew greater. We witness today that strain in its most serious aspect.

I submit to you men, here assembled in the New England Conference of Machinists, that it would be well to admit that strain exists, and I recommend you devote your energies to devising the best means to meet it. You men are representatives of a great portion of the industrial workers now engaged in turning out the tools of war. You have a great responsibility - to the members of your organizations - and to the people of the Country who are not of your groups.

You can discharge both responsibilities by an honest facing of the facts and by courageously doing what you know is right, in discharging your duty to your country in its hour of greatest need.

Nothing is to be gained, I am certain, by a resort to name-calling and abusive reproaches for failures - real or imaginary. Success lies in but one direction - that is a return to the one-ness of purpose which was ours immediately after Pearl Harbor.

We can help to promote that Unity, and though we may be met with many galling hindrances, we must persevere with our determination to have it at all costs.

You men of the Unions are being attacked more viciously today than has been the case in any of the years of war. If you permit yourselves to lose sight of the goal - victory for our arms abroad - you will be decoyed into violent labor controversies, strikes and walk-outs. You will be encouraged to wage internecine warfare - to destroy each other, so that when peace does come, your effectiveness will be at an end, and you will no longer be able to expend your energies in the betterment of your members and the community in general.

This is not witch-hunting - nor is it an attempt to shift responsibility. I am aware, I believe, of labor's responsibilities. I have always insisted that labor must acknowledge those responsibilities. It is only common justice, however, to insist that all others discharge the responsibilities which are theirs.

We are no longer a country of isolated communities. There are no new frontiers here to be conquered. There are no great forests to be cleared so that man can live off the soil. We are a nation of people - one dependent on another - and unless we all intelligently and honorably shoulder the responsibilities which are ours, then none of us can succeed.

In the days of Titans and Tycoons, men walked the streets in hunger, during periods of unemployment. Men patiently waited for "Times to get better", while Barrons of Business sat back in idleness and awaited the arrival of the period when their manipulations could obtain the greatest possible return on the dollar - when men had been driven by hunger to the stage where they'd accept with animal gratitude, the dollar that was flung at their feet.

Thank God, those days are no more. Men will no longer walk the streets in blind fear of the future. We are of age - as people - as a Nation. We know our responsibilities and we shoulder them. In doing so we shall insist that all do likewise, and we shall not stand by and permit those blinded by personal ambition or avarice to destroy all we have worked for - all we have gained.

They thump the tub today - All is the fault of the Unions. No good can come from the Unions. Cutbacks, planned and announced and insisted upon by Military authorities result in shortages - the Unions are blamed, although the cold, black record screams aloud with proof that such charges are false. Industrialists scurry about the halls and corridors of Washington, seeking to gain a special privilege in the rush for peacetime business - not content with a share, grabbing for it all, seeking an advantage over competitors; and the same men will sit at the radio microphone in Washington and screech

denunciations of unions - charging the men at the machines with sabotage of the war effort.

Industrialists boast at their great banquets about the brilliance of their managerial skill - yet, while the country clamors for materials for war - their best efforts are devoted to getting the jump on their competitors when they can flood the market with peacetime goods - and then, when asked for an explanation, they announce that unions are staging slow-down strikes in their factories.

Let a Union official suggest a transfer of men to work more essential to the war program, and he's attacked as a Red, a Radical, A Communist, seeking to obtain a monopoly of manufacture and distribution. Let a Union Official propose a measure of cooperation between labor and management in the better utilization of a plant's facilities - and he's attacked as an enemy of private enterprise.

These are the things I refer to when I speak of those who refuse to shoulder their share of the responsibility.

America has proved herself great in war - she will soon have the opportunity of proving herself great in peace. Just as we determined to conquer in war - so we must determine we shall not fail in peace.

Every member of every union is interested in Private Enterprise. He must be whether he speaks of it or not, for without private enterprise there will be no unions. But let those who seek to destroy the union think just a little less about their sacred shiboleth and just a little more about their country as a whole. We are all one in this war - let's be all one in the peace. Let's have more evidence of cooperation - for none of us can succeed alone.

If Industry wishes to look to reconversion - then let them say they are doing so - and stop blaming the unions for lagging production. If they feel they must devote some efforts to seeking peacetime markets - then let them shoulder the responsibility that goes with such a decision.

If industry wants peacetime production at its peak, then let it try to get along with the Union, rather than seeking methods to destroy it. Above all, let us have an honest effort to meet the ambition of every living man and woman - - security - for himself, his family and his home. We've had enough of the soles pronouncement - it won't work. We've listened to and read - far too often - the old bugaboos and scareheads that were pronounced when the Nation discussed Social Security, Fair Labor Standards, decent labor relations, and fair trade practices. We've seen there can be success along untried paths. They take courage. The greatest fighting, working, building organization in the world has a motto - it's "Can Do". Let's have a little more "Can Do" in industry, in the field of labor relations, in the field of social progress, and we'll really be under way to a glorious future for America and its citizens.

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John E. Fogarty, M. C.,
Room 1515, House Office Bldg.,
Washington, D. C.