

*Speech - AFL Convention - Sunday  
March 19th Radio: 3:00 to 3:30pm*

## I. INTRODUCTION.

### A. The problem

1. Since the latter part of 1948 all of us here in Rhode Island realize that business is not what it used to be.
  - a. We saw production curtailed or suspended - workers separated from their jobs with a consequent sharp rise in demands for Unemployment Insurance.
2. What we thought might only be a temporary trend has turned out to be more severe here in Rhode Island than in other parts of the country.
  - a. Unemployment is our problem today.
3. The release of reports, studies and recommendations by the Department of Employment Security last week only emphasized and highlighted this problem, and forecast, not a decline, but "a continued high rate of unemployment for 1950".

### B. It is serious

1. Naturally, we are all concerned about the problem - we can realize the serious and adverse effects of such a continuing condition on the healthier parts of our economy.
  - a. A continued high rate of unemployment means increased demands on unemployment funds.
  - b. This will naturally result in increased taxes for employers or employees.

- c. Increased taxes would mean increased costs and jeopardize the competitive advantage of our plants and enterprises in the market with perhaps - a consequent increase in unemployment.

**C. Suggested solution.**

1. The seriousness of the situation has not gone unnoticed.
  - a. From labor, from business and industry and from your State Government have come plans and proposals which seek to reduce unemployment by providing jobs through:-
    - (1) Expansion of the facilities which we have - and
    - (2) Encouraging new industry and business to establish here.
2. While all these plans have a great deal of merit and should demand our attention and study for a common pattern of action, I honestly believe that our unemployment condition here presents a compelling challenge to the leadership of both labor and management. -
  - a. Leadership that is:
    - (1) intelligent - more concerned with what's right - than whose right.
    - (2) courageous - willing to take the initiative and action on what's right.
    - (3) understanding - that accepts and recognizes common areas of interests and through cooperation works for the common goals.
  - b. Between the leadership of management and the leadership of labor there is more in common than in difference.

(1) The welfare of one - is the welfare of the other.

## II. MANAGEMENT CAN OFFER LEADERSHIP

- A. No one can deny American management's claim to the qualities of dynamic leadership.
1. And plants, enterprises, productive processes - technology and research are eloquent tribute to the intelligence, vision and imagination of the people who direct and manage them.
- B. Because the American worker recognizes the ability and capacity of management in these areas, he naturally expects and implicitly trusts that management will be ever on the alert to promote his job security through -
1. Research - developing new products - new uses for old products - better packaging, distribution and markets.
  2. Technological improvements - new methods, processes, layouts, better handling - which reduce costs - maintain competitive advantages in the market.
- C. Management failing to live up to this trust - failing to demonstrate the leadership expected of it - does a disservice to the worker, the community and our American system of free enterprise. Employment cannot be sustained - no jobs made secure. The citizen refused support from enterprise - turns to the Government.
- D. Management in our state can exert its leadership not only in the field of alert and progressive direction of business but more important still, in the field of industrial relations.

1. There was a time when unions did not exist to any degree. When the worker had grievances he took them up with the boss. Apparently no one satisfied him, so he organized the unions. Failure to respect the workers rights did not indicate good managerial leadership.
2. Once the unions were organized they asked management to respect their rights to bargain collectively. This was refused; so the unions turned to the Government. The result was the Wagner Act, 1935 - The Taft Hartley Act, 1947. This was not good leadership - they now complain of too much Government.
3. And today, in too many instances, management still feels, the unions are not here to stay; they are merely a temporary economic phenomenon and will pass on. The hope still springs eternal in the hearts of some management, that they can still regain the confidence and trust of the worker so foolishly lost by poor leadership in the past.
4. Now is the time for our management to really mature and recognize the union for what it has grown and has been accepted to be - an economic institution. The union must be recognized as an integral part of our economic system - similar to the corporation, the bank, the plant - the retail store. The union is here to stay.
5. There is still the wonderful opportunity on the part of management to offer the union its leadership not only through recognition of the unions' rights but through the acceptance of these rights. Only by such acceptance can suspicion, antagonism and apparent conflict of interests be resolved in favor of the common goal of both - jobs through business.

- E. It is this acceptance, this close understanding of common interests which can provide the jobs so needed today.

### III. UNION LEADERS CAN OFFER LEADERSHIP

- A. The leadership of management is not enough. Results - effective results can be achieved only when labor accepts its responsibilities.
- B. Unions exist for only a two-fold purpose; the protection of human rights and the promotion of the workers' welfare.
1. Without business, there are no jobs - and no jobs - no welfare and no present need for unions.
  2. Union leadership, therefore, is as interested in good business as management - the goals are the same.
- C. As an organization for the protection of human rights and the promotion of the workers' welfare, we should be
1. alert and receptive to anything that will sustain the jobs we have and expand existing opportunities -
  2. not too averse to changes which may be necessary to keep markets and therefore business and jobs -
  3. We must give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. To do otherwise is to add costs without production and thereby jeopardize the job security we all seek.
  4. We must through programs and all other resources at our command, educate our members in the principles and operations of our economic system. Only through the understanding of them can we realize the problems which confront business and industry and thus promote more intelligent and constructive bargaining.

5. We must be alert to programs of any kind which may place undue burdens upon industry, and thus render more hazardous our job security.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The goal of management and labor are the same. Management can't prosper without business and labor can't prosper without jobs. What can injure business can injure jobs. Our problem today is jobs -- more jobs. There seems to be no reason why labor and management skilled as they are in knowledge and supervision cannot rise to the maturity people expect of them and put away the childish fears and suspicions of mutual aggression. Get rid of the sometimes bitter tone and work together to build for more jobs. Work what we have and at the same time make our economic conditions so attractive that new industries can be invested in. Real genuine leadership can achieve this.