

BUSINESS BETTER?

American Industry Meet Reveals Some Optimism

By SAM LAWSON

NEW YORK—(AP)—There's an air of cross-fingered optimism at the Waldorf-Astoria today. In its opulent grand ballroom, America's most glittering pageant of industrial might is underway. And this time, as contrasted to last year, the boys attending the congress of American industry aren't scared half to death.

They were last year. Most of the three thousand top men in our manufacturing industries, who gather annually for the meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers, were enjoying the very peak of record prosperity, when NAM met a year ago. But many of them were on record as warning that a bad slump could be expected in 1949. You could fairly see the hair standing up on their heads.

This time, most of them admit 1949 turned out to be a pretty good year, after a bad start. And most of them appear to believe that 1950 will be a better one. Some even think a new boom may be starting.

Of course, there'll probably be a good deal of viewing it with alarm during the next three days at the Waldorf—it's pretty hard for most manufacturers to face in the direction of Washington with composure. And NAM speakers will stress the things they think are wrong, dangerous or threatening in our economy, and list the things they'd like to see changed—particularly in taxes and government interference with business.

Expect 1950 Better
But as to business prospects, most manufacturers are reported to be expecting to do better in 1950, especially in the first half

of the year. And in this optimism there is some evidence that manufacturers lead both wholesalers and retailers. The last is closer to the public, and more impressed by the tight string John Q. is keeping on his purse when he goes shopping.

Some 300 manufacturers were questioned at the end of November by Dun & Bradstreet, and 77 per cent said they expect to equal or exceed their 1949 first quarter levels in the first three months of 1950. New orders, 81 per cent predict, will equal or surpass last year's volume. The business agency interviewed an equal number of wholesalers and retailers and found them a little less optimistic.

However, three fourths of all the manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers queried think sales volume in the first three months of 1950 will equal or exceed first quarter 1949. Two-thirds of them think net profits will be as good or better, and four-fifths of them hope to hire as many or more employees.

Members of NAM are also cheered by the quick recovery in industry seems to be making after the steel and coal strikes, and by the higher than expected level at

T-H Labor Law Perfection Asked By Senator Taft

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—(AP)—Senator Taft (R-Ohio) called today for a "perfected and improved" Taft-Hartley labor law as one of the planks in a republican platform for the 1950 elections.

He offered the idea in a report to Ohio voters, released here. Taft also said his party is "opposed to excessive taxation and to government interference with business through price-fixing, wage-fixing, rationing or government competition."

"The Republican party insists on a sound basis of fiscal security by a balanced budget and a level of taxation which does not deter business expansion as it has done in Great Britain," he said, adding:

"It is completely opposed to socialism as destructive of liberty and progress."

Taft said the Federal government should concern itself with preventing the destruction of business freedom through monopoly and unfair competition.

Furthermore, he said, "it must concern itself with the abolition of all special privilege for employers or employees and the maintenance of equality between business and labor in labor-management relations as it has done through the Taft-Hartley law. That law should be perfected and improved."

As chairman of the Senate GOP policy committee, Taft is expected to have a hand in drafting a proposed statement of Republican policies for the 1950 Congressional elections.

He indicated that so far as he is concerned, he wants that proposed platform to bear down on the theme that too widespread government interference in the lives of the people deprive them of their liberties.

"We should recognize that free government service ultimately deprives the recipient of liberty as well as initiative and self-reliance," he said.

Deferred Living Plan To Be Tried At U. Of Oregon

EUGENE—(AP)—An eight-member student committee is working out details of the "deferred living" aims of the university.

The plan requires all first-year students to live in dormitories whether or not they are pledged to sororities and fraternities.

The school administration has expressed a desire that the sororities also defer pledging new students, but has left that to the students.

Another campus activity drawing student attention was a complaint against food served in the veterans' dormitories. The Oregon Inter-dormitory council and university administrators will confer on the subject.

Petitions signed by 397 students said the food was "at times almost inedible."

Santa Dismissed For Dumb Eyes Awarded Back Pay

PITTSBURGH—(AP)—A part-time Santa Claus must look the role right up to the merry sparkle in his eyes.

So testified Charles Ross, operator of a photographic studio in a local five-and-ten-cent store, as he appeared before Leonard A. Civill.

The matter of Santa Claus and his expression came up when Everett Frisbee, 31, filed civil suit against Ross asking \$15 back pay. Frisbee contended Ross reneged on a verbal contract. Ross said he had to let Frisbee go because his woeful eyes repelled children.

"He's got size and everything else for a good Santa," said Ross, "but those eyes send the kids away."

Alerman Civill awarded back pay of \$41.50 to Frisbee, who said he would be happy to return to his old job as a janitor.

The first Indian Totem poles are believed to have been built less than 200 years ago in British Columbia or the Queen Charlotte islands to the west of the Canadian province.

Beam transmission is a directional system for the sending of short wave signals that result in higher efficiency.

Large Uranium Ore Find Told

DENVER—(AP)—A mining company official says a 3,600-foot tunnel into the heart of the Rockies has pierced what may be an important mother lode of pitchblende—prime source of uranium.

The tunnel was drilled on what the official termed a half million dollar gamble in America's race for atomic supremacy.

Alexander Pregel of New York, vice president of the Canadian Radium and Uranium corporation, said here in an interview with the Denver Post that the tunnel, its location picked by scientific deduction, pierced the lode.

Pregel constantly referred to secrecy demands in connection with the atomic program but did give these details:

The lode was located in the old Caribou Mine district high in the mountains west of Boulder, Colo. Geologists long have felt some primary source of pitchblende along the backbone of the Rockies provided the scattering of secondary deposits found near the surface.

A number of these deposits were located with geiger counters, recording the radio activity of uranium. A tunnel was driven into the side of a hill. Now in 3,673 feet, plans are being made to fan out with other tunnels to adjacent areas in a search for more deposits.

"I can say this much," Pregel added. "We're in production."

First work in the area was heralded a year ago as possibly making the United States self-sufficient in uranium ore. Atomic Energy commission officials treated this statement with skepticism.

Pitchblende, which can contain from 40 to 90 per cent uranium oxide, is the source of the precious mineral in the Belgian Congo and the Great Bear Lake region in Canada, two of the major sources of ore. Production in Western Colorado and Utah comes principally from carnottite, a secondary ore.

Statisticians figure that an automobile radio set is used on the average by 12 per cent of the U. S. population 50 minutes a day.

New Federal Buildings Planned Total About 575

WASHINGTON—(AP)—More than 300 post office and other federal building projects have been selected for preparation of plans and acquisition of sites for future construction.

Chairman Olin D. Johnston (D-SC) of the Senate post office and civil service committee, told a reporter the approved list presented to him by the Post Office department, will be followed in the next few weeks by additional lists to bring the total number of federal building projects up to about 575.

Congress this year authorized a \$40,000,000 appropriation for site acquisition and plan preparation for urgently needed federal buildings throughout the country. With a few exceptions, no post offices have been built since before World War Two.

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