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EDITORIALS

HEADED FOR TROUBLE

In spite of this country's great wealth of men, machines, natural resources and technical ability, we are headed for trouble. The principal reason for the trouble is that in the wake of the war there is a crying need for everybody to work harder and longer than ever before and perhaps suffer a decline in living standards to boot, but nobody seems willing to do so. The theme song is shorter hours, higher wages, lower taxes.

However, unless more work and higher production accompanies wage raises, nothing has been gained. As Mr. Bernard Baruch said, "To make the take-home worth while, more things at lower prices must be produced. That is up to labor more than management. Unless each man produces more for what he receives, increases his output, there will be less for him and all the others. Each one will receive more money but have fewer things. . . . Who gets any advantage if goods are not produced faster than wages are advanced and money printed?"

What has been happening in the coal industry gives point to Baruch's

warning. Mine operators, knowing they were bucking an irresistible trend, offered the miners wage increases and shorter hours in conformity with settlements in the steel and automobile industries. This was before the latest coal strike. The offer would have added between 100 and 150 million dollars to the cost of producing bituminous coal in the course of 12 months, all of which would have been added onto the nation's fuel bill because the profit margin on coal can be squeezed no thinner. However, the strike went on for even higher stakes. The union now demands a 10-cent royalty or excise tax on every ton of coal, which would also have to be paid by the consumer. The royalty would put fifty million dollars annually into the hands of the union—more money than the bituminous coal industry netted after taxes. In 1943, the most recent year for which the figures are available.

Thus there will probably be less coal, at a higher price, when all that stands between the country and uncontrolled inflation is high production at a minimum price. This probability of less goods at higher and higher prices will become a certainty in all lines of industry if steps are not taken to curb the monopolistic power of the modern labor union.

THE CONFUSED GIANT

Amazement and concern is felt throughout the world at the spectacle of endless confusion besetting the United States. People are appalled at the exhibition of a giant who cannot pull himself together even to take care of his own needs.

The reasons for this country's confusion are a collection of little acts that add up to a mighty destructive force. These little acts are being committed from one end of the

public servants who knowingly or unknowingly undermine the source of our nation's greatest strength—the enterprise of individual citizens. They promote grandiose publicly-financed schemes in direct competition with the efforts of private citizens. The gigantic tax-financed and tax-exempt public power program is typical. Constant hauling and pulling between private enterprise and public enterprise in this field is damaging to the country beyond all calculation, because plainly evident is a basic struggle between two philosophies—the philosophy of private enterprise upon which this country was founded, and the philosophy of socialism. From electric power the spirit of conflict seeps through countless activities with an insidious enervating effect.

As an illustration of the process, consider a few newspaper items of the day. From Coos Bay, Oregon, appears the notice of the mayors of seven communities holding a conference to consider the possibilities of public electric power. Attending the

meeting was the Bonneville Administrator, a Federal official who actively encourages public power at every opportunity; another item from Junction City, Oregon, tells of efforts to form a public utility district for the distribution of tax-exempt Bonneville power. Another item from Oregon City, Oregon, cites the local tax assessor as reporting that half the property in his county is now tax-exempt public property—local tax-exempt Bonneville property alone, he estimated, would be assessable at more than a million dollars. The same situation prevails in all sections of the United States, where the

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