



The story of a People's crusade

A STORY EVERY AMERICAN CAN BE PROUD OF

This is the story of a people's triumph...the story of an aroused American public marching as to war.

Marching with scrap. Millions of tons of it...from homes, offices, stores, public buildings and farms...from cities, villages and hamlets.

Millions of tons of scrap for the steel mills...to enable them to produce the ships and tanks and planes and guns which our armed forces must have to win the war.

It was a major crisis that faced the nation early in September. If the steel mills didn't get more scrap metal soon, they would be forced to shut down. If the mills shut down...if our Army and Navy didn't get the arms and equipment they needed...how could we be sure of Victory?

It was, said Donald Nelson, one of the nation's gravest war problems.

The War Production Board knew that only by arousing the people in every community, only by making them scrapping mad, could the problem be solved. It had to be a people's job, a people's crusade. Nelson asked the newspapers of the country to lead it.

It was a big assignment. Gladly and quickly the newspapers accepted it. Almost overnight they set

up national, sectional, state, and local committees. Almost overnight nearly every newspaper in the country was in action...and had enlisted the aid of local officials and the cooperation of civic, welfare, and religious organizations.

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The drive was launched by advertisements...large, small and medium. Prepared by the National Committee of Newspapers and adjusted for local use by local newspapers, they appeared almost overnight and continued almost every day in hundreds of newspapers throughout the country. They furnished the motivating power. They started the people going. And when the people got going, the newspapers gave the drive further momentum with news stories, pictures, cartoons and editorials...urging the public to get out more scrap, to get out more scrap.

Each community handled the drive in its own way...adopted, under the leadership of local newspapers, special plans to fit its own local conditions. In thousands of communities there were local contests, prizes, public meetings, special events...to speed the job along.

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Within a few days, the whole nation was scrap-conscious. When the drive was only 16 days old, a

Gallup Poll showed that 94 per cent of the people knew about the great crusade, had read about the scrap campaign in their newspapers. The newspapers, with their ads and their stories, had taken the drive into every home in the country.

And within a few days, mountains of scrap began to pile up in thousands of cities, towns and villages. By truckload and bargeload and trainload the metal began to flow across the land to the mills...enabling the furnaces where Victory is being forged to glow again with the white heat of peak production.

The war on the scrap front must go on, of course. The steel mills will need scrap metal as long as the war lasts. But this, the first great battle, is won.

Donald Nelson wanted 4,000,000 tons of scrap in eight weeks. The people gave him more than

5,000,000 tons in three weeks. And that, said Vice Admiral S. M. Robinson, Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Procurement and Material, is enough scrap to build several times more battleships than there are in all the fleets of the world combined.

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That's the story, briefly. It's the story of a national triumph made up of thousands of local successes, in which local pride, local energy, and local leadership of newspapers went to work. It's a story in which millions of Americans had a part...a story every American can be proud of. And it demonstrates once again the power of the press, its capacity to serve the public...and its ability not only to sell the people an idea, but to get them to do something about it.

A Statement from DONALD NELSON, Chairman, War Production Board

"This has been a wonderful job and has resulted in increasing the flow of scrap to the steel furnaces that must be kept going to keep our munitions program up. The whole campaign has been a major contribution to the war effort...The job that the newspapers have done is absolutely unprecedented in this country...The results have surpassed my fondest hopes."