

# The Omaha Guide

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## Back To School

Once again the old schoolhouse bell will ring and boys and girls throughout the nation will go ripping merrily back to school.

It will be a great day for most of them, after a three month's vacation filled with picnics, sightseeing trips, parties, outings and generally having loads of fun, it will be a change.

To others it will be looking forward and toward the future where they will plan and prepare for a better America through education. These boys and girls will carry on the traditions of the true democratic principles so nobly set down in the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Gettysburg Address, etc., by our forefathers. They will see that discrimination as to creed, color, or racial identity will be forever erased from our nation's history. On these small shoulders will fall great responsibilities and grave problems confronting the American people of this great nation.

Yes, back to school they go, to learn to prepare for a better way to live in order that they might be ready when the time comes to take their place in the American way of life. A life that opens its doors of opportunity to all according to his or her given ability and desire to contribute something to mankind everywhere. A way of life that will help to build a greater, stronger and saner America. A way of life that will make democracy ring forever throughout the land and abroad.

These boys and girls will be preparing for all of this and more, yet many are too young yet to realize it. As they grow in strength, wisdom and vision their once little infant minds will grasp the great problems confronting our nation, and they will take up the banner of Democracy and carry it to a victorious conclusion.

## Labor Day

Labor Day, 1947, will have a significance that goes far beyond the picnics and the parades and the windy speeches that mark all national holidays.

American labor has come to a crossroad. On the one hand, it has achieved enormous economic and political power, and wages and working conditions unequalled throughout the world. On the other hand, as a result of certain grave abuses of that power, it has incurred the distrust of millions of Americans who are not "anti-labor" but are "anti-racketeer."

The Taft-Hartley measure marks the first decisive attempt to correct these abuses. But a law is not enough. Labor could evade and perhaps circumvent for a time the clear intent of Congress. It could continue to hamper production and disrupt the smooth functioning of our economic machine. It could continue to reduce the prestige of this country abroad and its security at home. Should it do that, it would eventually bring down the wrath of the people upon its head, and invite a really tough law that would drastically limit its rights and privileges.

If labor will cooperate with industry and the government to clean its own house and to contribute its full measure to the production of goods and services, it will earn and receive the respect and confidence of the country. It is a good sign that some leading labor leaders have recently said that workers' productivity should be increased. One reason for today's high prices lies in the fact that output per man hour has gone down even as wages have gone up. Labor's basic interest lies in "real wages," which means wages measured in the light of purchasing power, not merely the number of dollars in the pay envelope. Labor Day will be a memorable date if it marks the start of a voluntary effort to resolve labor-management differences through honest collective action, and to stabilize the American economic system.

## What The Consumer Wants

At various times polls have been made of consumer needs, desires and eccentricities. And the answers show why there is plenty of room for all kinds of stores, from independents to chains, and from gigantic department stores to little specialty shops.

One segment of the consuming public is primarily interested in certain trade-marked brands, and buys only in stores which carry those it favors.

Still another segment places service high on the list of its requirements. It wants delivery of good to the home, the charge account privilege, a very liberal policy in exchanges, etc., and it is willing to pay the added costs that these and other services entail.

Under the free competitive system—which is the American system—there is a store to meet every demand. Every kind and character of consumer commodity is stocked, and a long list of brands is offered. If one store can't meet some buyer's standards, another store down the street will. And every merchant who keeps up with the times will get his share of the business. American retailing is geared to serve the varying wishes of the 140,000,000 Americans who patronize it.

In June there was a 13 per cent decline in American export trade. This reflected a decline in foreign buying power due to depletion of dollar credits—not a decline in foreign desire and need for U. S. goods.

However, the drop had relatively little effect on industry—the domestic market is still able to absorb all we can produce.

## The Offerings



## THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS

Profits spark our economy. Yet from much current discussion of profits, one would think they burden our economy, and that it would be better if all business operated constantly at the break-even point.

MUCH OF THE current discussion of profits has been of over-all aggregate profits, without regard to volume of sales. Such discussion is bound to give a distorted picture.

TO A CONSIDERABLE extent, profits represent accruals of physical assets. A large part of profits in 1946 was due to increases in inventories and higher prices of inventories.

STOCKHOLDERS HAVE not benefited much from dividend payments in the past five years, because corporations have had to retain an unusually large portion of profits for capital needs. In 1946, only 44 per cent of corporate profits were paid out in dividends. Since 1942 dividend payments ranged from 43 to 53 per cent of profits.

IF WE CONSIDER aggregate profits it is fair to consider aggregate wages. Wages in manufacturing increased from \$9,390-million in 1939 to \$25,016 in 1946—an increase of 166 per cent. During the same period, aggregate profits of manufacturing corporations increased from \$2,941-million to \$6,338-million—an increase of 113 per cent.

AS A MATTER of fact, profit rates in 1946 (5.0 per cent) were slightly lower than in 1939 (5.1 per cent).

HUMAN RELATIONS A Midwestern manufacturer sent personal letters asking employees on his payroll five years or more, what they think of the company, its management and supervision, and their own future prospects.

Replies showed 65 per cent believe they have done better in their present jobs than their could have done elsewhere. The average has been on the job 8.75 years, has had five advancements, and now gets \$1.59 per hour, compared with 59 cents less than nine years ago.

## Can Racial Prejudice Be Stamped Out?

By BLANCHE ALICE RICH

What is prejudice? The dictionary says prejudice is an injury due to some judgment or action



BLANCHE ALICE RICH

of another, as in disregard of a person's rights.

Because prejudice has poisoned human relations since the dawn of civilization, skeptics maintain that it is human nature to be prejudiced, and that human nature is unchangeable. Others, disagreeing, point out that society is advancing steadily to higher levels of development. There are many things we as citizens can do.

First of all we must shed our own prejudices. We must teach children and their parents so they won't feed the slow poison to their children—we can have peace only if there is trust among people. Sermons in every church should aim to stamp out intolerance. Radio talks, and magazine articles will help to make the public think about the problem, and maybe their children will have different ideas.

Racial and religious prejudice can and must be stamped out. People were not born with prejudices—they acquired them as a result of their environment.

One time a man was walking by a lake and he saw some little ducks by the shore. He went to

them and picked one up and fondled it. He put it down and started to walk away when the Mother duck discovered him. She hurriedly swam to her brood and made a big fuss and shooed them away from the shore. When the man walked back again later, as soon as the little ducklings saw him coming they began swimming away from the shore. They were frightened of the man. They had not been frightened until the Mother duck had put the instinct of fear in them.

It is the same way in children. They are not born with it. To discover the origin of prejudice in the life of a person, we must begin at the beginning. Psychologists have studied Negro bias in white children living both in the North and in the South. Their most striking finding was that little children do not have prejudices. Three and four year olds make no distinction between Negro and white playmates.

Yet the "race" prejudice does emerge, but gradually. The child observes very carefully what his parents and other adults do. The child soon sees discrimination all around him. His parents never invites Negroes to the house as they do their white friends. If Negroes are around they are usually servants or hired hands.

The child eventually thinks this must be the way to treat Negroes. The prejudice is clearly not instinctive because children are not born with it, and takes a long time to develop it, often resisting very strongly.

Research has shown that children of parents who treat Negroes as equals do not develop a bias. Prejudice comes from contact with prejudice. It does not come into being out of thin air. But who does start the prejudice?

It has been demonstrated that Negro prejudice in America was created and kept alive by the people who had the most to gain by it—the Southern land owners, who were later joined by industrial and business interests. They controlled, and still do, the press and other means of communication. Any motion picture which defends the rights of the Negroes or of the white sharecroppers cannot be shown in any Southern community. The system of education is controlled in the same way.

The landowners and business men feel that by making the people believe that the Negro is inferior, and that by keeping him in an inferior position they can have a constant source of cheap labor.

Prejudice exists because some group who has the power to put it into effect, gains by it. Once the prejudice has caught on it is easy to keep alive, and passed down from father to son. Money, as well as power, is usually what the group behind gains.

Negroes have had only eighty years of freedom as a group. Stating with almost nothing by the way of property, education or organization, they have made historic strides toward overtaking whites as a group, and individual Negroes have managed to attain some status as lawyers, physicians, ministers and property owners, which helps to spur the others on; but none can really escape the discrimination.

## A LABOR PROGRAM AGAINST INTOLERANCE

By John W. Gibson  
Assistant Secretary of Labor

The Commission holds to the faith that if people are exposed to the inner truth of the life of a particular group, they will gradually build up respect for an understanding of it.

The above quotation is taken from the recent report of the distinguished Commission on Freedom of the Press headed by Robert M. Hutchins, Chancellor, University of Chicago. In the Commission report it applied, of course, to the factual, and representative portrayals of social and ethnic groups. But even out of context this particular statement has pertinent application to the problems and responsibilities of the labor movement in connection with religious and racial tolerance.

We have spoken a lot of generalities about racial prejudices and religious intolerance in the labor movement; some brave words have been uttered; countless resolutions have been passed; here and there some progress has been made. On cannot help but wonder, however, how much, in terms of the practical, work-a-day world of the trade union member, it all means.

A Negro member of the UAW, telling his story in the April 1947 issue of Ammunition, organ for the educational department of that union, thinks that workers, when they go into the plant, "bring their prejudices with them." He adds, "in our union they learn." In his shop, he felt, the program of the fair practices committee was taking hold, "down in the hearts of men and women."

Is this a widespread or even fairly frequent experience? I doubt it. The organized labor movement currently constitutes about 16 per cent of the adult population and it is reasonable to assume that it carries within it a replica of the pattern of thinking which characterizes the population as a whole. If this is true then we do indeed bring our prejudices with us not only into our plants but into our stores, offices, school rooms, and other places of work. And the resolutions, while they indicate the fundamental decency and progressivism of labor movement cannot alone fulfill their objective.

We must implement the resolutions with a painstaking and workable program. We start with one advantage: the character of unions themselves. While union members may be subject to the many racial and religious prejudices of the general adult population, they are the most highly organized and most enduring segment of the population; they meet regularly, they are banded together for a common objective and purpose, they too have the benefit of well-established means of communication.

I suggest only the broad outlines of a program which is flexible enough to be adaptable to local needs. I start with the premise that an effort to combat and eventually to eradicate racial and religious prejudice in the labor movement must be a part of the general program for workers' education. Workers' education classes which present, objectively and accurately, interesting lectures on the following general subjects should be developed in every locality:

1. The contributions of various religious and racial groups to the American community and to the labor movement itself.
2. The origin and development of the races of mankind.
3. The origin and development of religions and religious groups.
4. A frank discussion of myths and slanders connected with racial and religious groups.

Such lectures could be followed up with talks by religious and racial leaders of the community talks which would be built around the economic and social problems of the particular group. Granted the reasonable success of such a program, its scope could be expanded. The labor movement of the community officially should help initiate and participate in similar programs for the locality as a whole, through such organized groups as parent-teacher associations and adult education classes.

Looking at the articles in this series in previous issues of LABOR REPORTS, I find a common thread of agreement: intolerance in general is a threat to labor; intolerance on the part of labor itself is a movement toward self-destruction. Labor must diminish the discrepancy between their resolutions and their actions against intolerance. The mighty organized will of the free American trade union movement, which in the past has been harnessed to countless social and economic reforms must again take the lead.

The Russians Wouldn't Get It

By GEORGE S. BENSON  
President of Harding College  
Searcy, Arkansas

Looking Ahead

WE TALK of those Russians being difficult to understand. But there are some things our totalitarian neighbors would never be able to understand about us. They just wouldn't get it. The way we argued and fussed over the labor bill Congress just passed, for example. Then when the bill became law, we all settled down to see if we can abide by it. This is what we call majority rule, through the elected representatives of the people.

In our kind of set-up, people are given credit for being able to think for themselves. Facts are easy to get hold of. Viewpoints may be freely expressed. We make up our minds, and our representatives try to carry out our wishes. Things do not go like this in the totalitarian countries. Such questions would never be placed before the people in the first place. Regardless of everything else the will of the dictator would prevail.

Controversial ORGANIZED LABOR, in its attitude toward the Taft-Hartley Bill, has demonstrated the manner in which the "people's mandate" is accepted in a land where laws are determined by the will of the majority, but where all minorities are respected. The bill was the most controversial legislation to come up in years. Much feeling was developed. Lobbying was everywhere.

Yet, when the labor bill became law over the President's veto, and when the President had stated that he'd sincerely enforce it and not sabotage the law, the top leaders of labor affirmed there would be no general protest strikes. Rightly, they declared they would test it in the

courts, where laws should be tested. If the legislation is in error, time will tell. In the true American tradition of fairness and justice, we are awaiting the proving and testing of the new law.

How About NOW I WOULD Economics? Like to say that the whole nation's economy is the direct result of this sort of thing. We may not like the decision of the majority, but we go along and make it work. We bank on the majority being right. We are willing to let the majority, through our elected representatives, write the laws. Most historians agree this is the best kind of government that civilization has yet developed.

Economics used to be a big word. Now, nearly everybody understands it to mean the way we use our resources and consume our wealth. This includes production, buying, and selling. It includes the activities of labor and of management. Traditionally, in this country, we have allowed our economy to remain free of artificial barriers which would hamper its natural laws, like that of supply and demand, for instance.

The important thing: free trading and buying and selling (that is, an economy which freely belongs to the people), works best when we have a truly representative government. They go hand in hand. Tyrants and dictators never let these things go free. A restricted economy and a non-representative government, you'll find, are always part and parcel of the totalitarian method. This method never pays high wages. In America we have a great land. We pay the highest wages men ever earned. Let's keep it that way! And free!

## The Veteran Asks . . .

Q. Will the Veterans Administration guarantee a loan made to me by my uncle, who is a non-supervised lender?

A. Yes, but made by non-supervised lenders require prior approval of the Veterans Administration. Your uncle should submit the proposal to the local VA regional office for approval.

Q. I wanted to file application for a disability pension full amount?

A. This is a matter to be set when I was discharged from the service, but passed up my chance because I was afraid it would delay my discharge. Can I still apply?

For a disability at any time. Visit the nearest Veterans Administration office where a contact representative will assist you in filing an application.

Q. I want to get a G. I. loan guarantee for the purchase of a home. Will I be required to put up any of my own money, or can I get a loan for the full amount?

A. This is a matter between you and the agency which loans you the money. The Veterans Administration does not require you to put up any money in order to obtain the loan guarantee, but the lender may. Lenders often require down payments in cases where the veteran wishes to borrow an unusually large amount of money.

As in the past, it will be a manifestation of the development and growth of the movement — true growth which comes from a stirring of the roots. And that is why, in discussing the fight against intolerance, I stress local activity so heavily.

Q. My National Service Life Insurance term policy lapsed after I was discharged from the service. How can I reinstate it?

A. You may reinstate the policy by certifying that you are in as good health as at the time the policy lapsed, and by paying two monthly premiums. This simple method of reinstating term insurance will be in effect until Dec. 31, 1947, irrespective of the date of lapse. Beginning next year it may be used only within 3 months of the lapse date. You may obtain a reinstatement form at any Veterans Administration Office.

Q. How long after discharge from the service may a veteran claim readjustment allowances? I understand that the allowances stop when the veteran has received all he is entitled to, but how much time does he have in which to collect his allowances?

A. Readjustment allowances (jobless pay) are available to an eligible veteran only for two years after the end of the war, which became official on July 25, 1947, or from date of discharge, whichever is later, and no allowances will be paid for any week five years from July 25, 1947.

Q. I have been attending college under the G. I. Bill. May I transfer from one college to another without losing my rights to educational benefits?

A. Yes. Under the regulations of the Veterans Administration, a veteran may change his school, but he must have approval of the Veterans Administration in advance.

Fishing and Hunting Area

Sun Valley Idaho, borders on a hunting and fishing area as large as the State of Connecticut.

## THE POCKETBOOK OF KNOWLEDGE By PILGRIM

ONE OUT OF THREE

STRIKE UNEMPLOYABLE WORKERS

SEEK YOUR OWN PART

2,836,000 BUSINESSES IN THE U.S. EMPLOYING FEWER THAN 100 PERSONS EACH, PROVIDE JOBS FOR A THIRD OF ALL WAGE EARNERS

IN THE 8 MONTHS AFTER V-J DAY, STRIKES AVERAGED 372 A MONTH

THE WEIGHT OF BLOOD IS ONE EIGHTH OF THE WHOLE BODY

COUNT EM, BUDDY!

NEW WALL HOLDER FOR ELECTRIC SHAVERS TURNS OFF AND ON AND REELS UP THE CORD

A DOG HAS FORTY-TWO PERMANENT TEETH