

HOW SHIPS MAKE CUSTOMERS FOR FARMERS

(By Edward N. Hurley, chairman United States Shipping Board.)

A manufacturing concern in this county sent a representative to Argentina to look into markets there for its hardware and building supplies.

The agent spent several months studying the requirements of prospective customers, and sent home a few trial orders.

"Well," he said to the manager on his return, "did you ship those things?"

"Oh, yes; they left some time ago."

"How about the nails? Did you pack them as I explained?"

"They went out in kegs, just as all our nails go out," replied the manager.

"Then we've lost that business. I told you they must be shipped in two-pound paper packages."

"Sure you did, but whoever heard of such a fool thing! We don't ship nails in paper bags."

Now, there was an American firm spending good money to find out just what South American markets needed, then wasting that money and losing future business simply because it did not appreciate the fact that South American markets and North American markets are two different things.

The agent of that concern ordered nails shipped in two-pound paper packages simply because that was the only form in which the dealers there would handle them. These packages exactly fitted the pockets of saddlebags, in which they were carried over mountain trails to the farms. A keg of nails could not be sold.

Our American manufacturers and producers generally never can hope to see the great after-war American merchant marine fulfill its destiny in the world's commerce unless export markets are developed with sincere regard for the demands of those markets. We never will be able to force anything on any market.

The Germans built up a colossal pre-war export trade with South America simply by catering to that trade. We have got to do the same thing in every market which we hope to enter in competition with the commerce of the rest of the world.

It is here that every commercial organization can do a splendid work. Our Federal Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce makes scores of studies in foreign markets and puts the results of these studies at the disposal of American business. Every local organization should feel itself duty bound to study these results and see that they are placed before every producer or manufacturer who could possibly contribute to filling the after-war demand for American products.

We must find out exactly what the other fellow wants and just how he wants it and then spare no effort to supply it in just that form. If we don't, then we might as well make arrangements now for the hiring out of the ships we are building to other nations who observe export trade requirements to the last "trifling" detail.

This appeal I am addressing to farmers and the trade organizations of their towns.

"Why to farmers?" a man recently asked me. "What earthly interest can a farmer have in export nails or pianos or harvesting machines? Why not talk to farmers in terms of export fruit, live stock, and the like?"

This is a narrow view of a vital national question. The farmer's interest in the American merchant marine is just as great in terms of pianos as it is in terms of polled cattle.

Every increase in export trade in manufactured products means the expansion of a business. This calls for the employment of more labor at the factories. And whenever this happens, or whenever business is stabilized to the point where heavy populations of factory workers are given steady employment, the direct benefit to the farmer is tremendous.

The farmer is the man who supplies the food to the towns of the houses of these workers. Also he supplies scores of raw products to the factories themselves. Increase manufacturing in any community and you automatically increase the prosperity of the neighboring farmers. No local board of trade or chamber of commerce or commercial club works to get a factory in its town simply for the benefit of the town people; the whole county shares in the benefits.

Let no wool grower lose interest in the American merchant marine because he is told that in America land is too expensive to enable him to compete with Australians in export markets. Even if this is true, that grower can share in the benefits of export trade in manufactured products though they contain not a

strand of wool.

The development of our merchant marine's after-war trade is going to prove one of the most broad-gauged undertakings to which America has ever set herself, and needs for its realization the unstinted support of every man in the country. Let us throw overboard every narrow-gauge idea while we tackle the big job.

The American merchant marine belongs to no class or group of interests; the ships are being launched with your money, the crews that man them will be made up of your sons, and the prosperity they bring will be your prosperity.

RECONSTRUCTION AND THE FARMER

The war may soon be over. If so, what plans have the farmers made to make certain that in the readjustments the welfare of agriculture will receive its full measure of consideration?

Letters will be sent out by the National Board of Farm Organizations within a few days to farmers in every state in the Union suggesting that quick action be taken in regard to matters of reconstruction after the war.

Bills are already in congress and others are certain to follow, bearing on the methods under which this nation, unhampered by the restrictions of war, shall once more pursue the commercial and industrial pathways of peace.

Unless the farm organizations of this country take a hand in the shaping of legislation bearing on the problems arising out of the war there is grave danger that measures will be enacted which may lead to permanent injury to agriculture. It is high time for farm organizations to get their affairs in order and be ready to act together in the making of wise and constructive plans.

The farmer who belongs to no farmers' organization should join one without a moment's delay; every part of the country has some educational or business organization ready to receive him. Individual's ideas count for little in the framing of laws or in the building of national institutions unless they reflect the thought and accurately interpret the desires of the masses. To weigh evidence in the business experience of many farmers and unite on a program which will give the greatest benefit to the greatest number is the legitimate object of farm organizations. In this way only can the voice of the individual be heard and the needs of committees be made articulate.

Business, long before the days of the Hanseatic League, has been organized to take care of its own. At this moment wealth, prestige, the power to do great good or evil are in the hands of men who have organized.

These men will emerge from the war still better prepared and with sharpened appetite. Business will reach out in every direction for trade and profits.

It will ask for legislation, special privileges, and get both, if it can. On former occasions it has been successful. Unless agriculture develops simultaneously with business there will be no real progress in this nation. There must be greater guarantees in agriculture than now exist. People flock into the businesses that are remunerative. The tendency is to the cities and away from the farm. The number of tenant farmers in this country is increasing too rapidly. Perhaps half of the farms are now operated by renters and tenants who afford the basis for shifting farm populations concerned but little with the responsibility for sound and healthy rural institutions.

Without organizations of farmers and unity of action among them industry and commerce will get more than their share of consideration from the law makers in matters affecting the creation and division of wealth. Great corporations are now in existence with insatiable desire for profits. New vast combinations are in the making with ambitions for world trade conquest. International combines are already formed, now a necessary arm to military success, and in them lie the seeds of commercial world-wide domination.

Since last year the farmers of America have been affected by regulatory powers vested in the National Food Administration. On this body have sat the leaders and representatives of some of the greatest industrial and commercial interests of the nation. Packers, millers, manufacturers, processors, dealers and vendors of foods and feeds have been called to Washington frequently to determine policies affecting the financial condition of every farmer in the United States. The same thing is true of the War Industries Board, the Fuel Administration, and other governmental agencies. The past year has called for the patriot and

found him fighting on land and sea and in the air and unquestionably on the war boards. The national danger has stirred men's nobler impulses. With few exceptions, the representatives of business who have sat on the War Boards have sought to protect the public interests as they understood the meaning of the term.

Few, if any, farmers have been asked to become members of these boards. There are a number of men in the Food Administration who own fine farms. But ownership of land does not make a city man a farmer. His business connections and instincts throw him into sympathetic association with the urban trend of thought whenever it conflicts with that of the farmer. The farmer's part in determining policies has been largely negative. A small handful of wealthy and influential farmers have been called into consultation at Washington from time to time. Several leaders of farm organizations, among them members of the National Board of Farm Organizations, are consulted in times of emergency. The job of the National Food Administration has been to get sufficient food at the lowest cost to the non-producers of food at home and abroad. Farmers believe they are entitled to what is fair and rightfully theirs. They are still asking that they be assured the cost of production for wheat, live stock, milk, and other products. Whatever concessions have been made to the farmers have been made slowly, reluctantly, of necessity, and from fear that the food program would fall down.

Military necessity alone justified such a policy, in the carrying out of which captains of industry have directly or indirectly had a hand. Working patriotically for a dollar a year on the government boards, some of these people have secured an insight into trade conditions and human psychology that at the close of the war may be capitalized for countless millions by the interests these men represent.

The farmers of America should know and consider these facts and be ready to protect themselves. Nobody else will do it for them half so well. There is talk of continuing these boards after the war. Then patriotism will not be so strong a motive in men's hearts. Farmers are not wholly unselfish. They are but human. But the structure of their plan for co-operative business is sound and democratic. It is based on the principle of "self-help through mutual help." It is a more altruistic conception than that of the modern business world and as one of the builders of true democracy its voice should be heard in the reconstruction.

CHARLES A. LYMAN, Secretary.

HOW IT HAPPENED

We read in the papers that the French private soldier's pay is to be increased by 10 cents a day, which will make his total daily stipend almost equal to the sum of two bits in our money. And they may talk all they please about the reasons the French government had for authorizing this staggering increase, but we know the real reason. There will be about 1,000,000 American soldiers in France for several months, or maybe a year, each of them receiving at least a dollar a day. Now, what happened, according to our way of figuring it out was this: The French soldiers sent a committee to see old Doc Clemenceau, and they told him that if they didn't get more pay the American soldiers, with their untill wealth, would spend so much money on the French girls that the natives would not have a look-in in the beautiful, bright days that are coming. So they got their raise, and it will be more of a fair contest from this time on. We will leave it to any soldier if we are not right.—Spokesman-Review.

Atlantic Oshen, Sepober the Five.

Deere Kusun August:

Vat I vill now take pen in hand and let you know dat pure deer unkie iss ded. If he would have leaved till Kristmus he would be just sikks months ded. After pure deer unkie was ded, de doktors gave up all hopes of saving hiss life. You are the only leeving relatif besides two kunsins vat was killed by der Phillipeens.

De reason I vas not write sooner is becauz ve don't live vere we did, ve mooved vere ve are. If you vas not git dis ledder, let me know und I vill written you annudder von. Hoping to see you by der next mail, I stay your Kuzin,

Hans Venerworst Von Arcadia

P.S. Please don't open dis ledder as der iss sad news in it.

—Pull Men.

Stranger—I suppose you have had some halbreadth escapes in your career on water?

Pullman Gob—Yeh; once I nearly drowned.

Stranger—How did it happen?

P. G.—I went to sleep in the bath and forgot to turn off the water!

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Thanksgiving

THIS year should mean more than usual, for we truly have something to be thankful for.

With the armistice signed and the world at peace we can not be otherwise than happy.

However, our stability will endure in conformity with our unselfishness of purpose and charitableness directed toward all laudable enterprises.

Generosity begets generosity. Just as long as large-hearted service is maintained by us individually and collectively as a nation, we will remain as a people imperishable and indestructible.

The officers of this institution believe that every American should recognize his importance as a unit in the national fabric. May we each contribute the full strength of our influence.

Remember that our boys are overseas—that we have a duty to perform in seeing that they are returned safely and proper employment given them, so we should continue with the war program as the government calls on us.

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