

THE FARMER'S SIDE

The following statement of principles affecting agriculture in its relation to other industries was submitted by the employers group to the industrial conference at Washington. It was formulated by Chas. S. Barrett, T. C. Atkeson, and J. N. Tittemore, the farmers' representatives in the conference.

Responding to the call of the President of the United States that the industrial conference convene "for the purpose of reaching, if possible, some common ground of agreement and action with regard to the future conduct of industry" and for the purpose of enabling us to work out, if possible, in a genuine spirit of co-operation a practical method of association based upon a real community of interests which will redound to the welfare of all our people," the group representing employers assent to the presentation of the following fundamental principles affecting agriculture by which these purposes may be accomplished, viz:

Statement of Principles Prepared by Representatives of Agriculture at the Industrial Conference

A nation's prosperous and progressive agriculture, without which democracy must fail and the people go hungry, can only be maintained by political, social and economic justice. The net return for labor, management and capital used in farming is today smaller than the return in any other great industry. The increase in production of agricultural staples is not keeping pace with the increase in population or consumption. There is a marked relative decline in proportion of men and capital engaged in agriculture compared with other industries and an actual decline in certain sections. This is what is meant by a "declining agriculture" and is the condition which we face today in this basic and most essential American industry. This statement of fact is a standing indictment of the political, social and economic treatment now and heretofore accorded agriculture and must not be permitted to continue. Present conditions will inevitably destroy independent, self-respecting citizenship in the open country. The surest guarantee of an enduring American democracy, the bulwark of our nation against false economic and political doctrines, and the sole barrier between the industrial people of the world and starvation for its least fortunate, is the free, land owning, home loving citizenship.

Farming and farmers must have the economic, social and political justice which will make farming as profitable and as livable as any other occupation involving the same amount of hard work, business ability and investment, or the balance between farm production and urban consumption can not be maintained. It is unfortunate that a technical meaning has arisen to the words capital and labor which in many minds excludes agriculture from either class when from the standpoint of capital the business is easily the largest business, and from the standpoint of labor there is no other industry that includes nearly as many laborers within its activities. Any conclusions, therefore that may be reached in this conference can scarcely prove to be permanent unless they shall include the welfare of farmers as laborers and farm owners as capitalists. And added to this is the fact that if any industry may be defined as basic, it is the one that independently of all others is self-sustaining and self-perpetuating; one that was in the beginning with the birth of civilization and without which civilization must perish. The great bulk of actual wealth of the nation springs from the soil. And the balance of trade that has made this nation rich comes from the same source.

Modern Agriculture

Farmers have responded to the ever increasing demands of modern industrial and economic development. The modern farm is no longer a self-sustaining unit as in primitive days, but has become a highly specialized production plant, the operation of which requires technical skill and managerial ability, with large investments in modern labor-saving machinery. Six million such farms make up the vast industry of America's agriculture, on the uninterrupted operation of which depends the daily supply of food to all the people.

The Farmer as a Laborer

The daily manual labor of operating farms in this country is equivalent to that of 13,000,000 adult workers. The price of farm products determines the farmer's wage. The solidarity of labor is such that farmers can not continue on one wage level while the rest of labor is on another level. One must rise or the other fall until a level is reached.

The Farmer as an Employer

American farmers employ more

laborers than any other single industry. The number of operating farmers and their hired employees is greater than that of laborers in all other industries combined. Any adjustment of industrial wage disputes to be fundamentally sound and permanent must give full consideration to the relation between wages on American farms and in other industries. To pay higher wages on the farm inevitably means higher prices for farm products. The present level of wages makes it impossible to cultivate American farms with the greatest efficiency and must reduce production.

Reciprocal Duties and Obligations

To produce sufficient food is the primal duty of those engaged in agriculture, and to the limit of their physical and financial ability this duty should be performed. For this there must be an equivalent in value. Farmers discharging this duty to organized society have a right to demand—

(a) Such returns as will fairly compensate them for their capital invested, their technical skill, their managerial ability and their manual labor.

(b) That they and their families have social, educational and political opportunities equal to those engaged in other activities.

Failure to meet these demands will result in a continuance and an acceleration of the decline in agriculture. Increased production is still the slogan of the hour and the farmer is still working at high speed and long hours and without adequate help, and facing falling markets for his products. He now appeals to those in other callings to buckle down to work and turn out the products, stop the profiteering and all together begin to pay the debt that hangs over the land.

Farm Production

The demand for farm products should be scientifically satisfied. Over-production as well as under-production dislocates industrial and economical balances, and in the end results in economic waste. In 1910 we produced over 11,000,000 bales of cotton. In 1911 we produced 13,000,000 bales and yet received \$60,000,000 less than nothing for them. In 1915 we produced 1,025,000,000 bushels of wheat and received \$942,000,000 for it. In 1916 we produced 640,000,000 bushels and received \$1,020,000,00 for it. Society had the benefit of 385,000,000 bushels of wheat, but the farmer received \$78,000,000 less than nothing for them. Thus it will be seen that simply to produce will not mean prosperity. Reliable official cost of production studies and records are in existence proving inadequate returns to agriculture. This information should be widely circulated so that the public may know the truth. Further studies of cost of production, together with comprehensive studies of marketing, including prices actually received by farmers, are also needed.

Hours of Labor

Neither the day nor the week is a unit upon which agricultural costs or income can be satisfactorily based. Conditions are so variable that it is difficult to prescribe a rule applicable to all localities or to any locality at all seasons. It is, however, becoming more difficult for farmers to secure laborers who are willing to work more hours than do laborers in other industries. Experience shows that the hours of farm hired laborers approximate the hours of labor finally prescribed in other industries. The nature of agricultural work is such that it cannot economically adjust itself to a specific hour day. If a definite day basis is determined upon in other industries, however, this basic day must be the unit of all estimates in farm production costs.

Soil Fertility

Economic conditions should be such that the farmer may operate his land so that its fertility shall be maintained and perpetuated. An adequate future supply of food requires that the fertility of the soil should be conserved and replenished. The people should unite in all measures, legislative or otherwise, that will permit and accelerate the movement of fertilizers in such form and quantities and at such prices as will enable farmers to maintain and conserve soil fertility.

Co-Operative Marketing

Economic and industrial conditions in agriculture necessitate co-operative marketing. Legal obstacles are now handicapping such effort. All necessary amendments should be made to state and federal laws to clearly preserve to farmers the right of co-operatively marketing their farm products.

Farm Organizations

Economic efficiency in agriculture is promoted by every agency which adds to the knowledge, experience, satisfaction, technique and equipment of the individual farmer. For these purposes strong self-supporting

farmers' organizations are urged, to develop leadership from their own ranks and in accord with their own best interests; and to represent the industry in its contact with other industries and with the public.

Storage

Adequate food storage reservoirs are essential to a well fed people. In time of heaviest production foods should be stored away in such quantities as will tide over periods of nonproduction. Depletion of these supplies during the harvest months will probably mean bread lines before spring. Wise public policy will encourage properly regulated storage by farmers and others of essential reserves of food.

The High Cost of Living

Much of the complaint of the high cost of living is the result of extravagant living. The cost of living is high or low according as the price of necessities of life rise above or fall below the general level of salaries, wages and income. The present cost of living is not due to the prices received by the farmer for his products, as shown by a comparison between farm prices, food prices, and wage levels. Reliable government statements indicate that the percentage of increase in food prices is not as great as that of other commodities entering into the cost of present day living or of the level of wages in other industries.

Land Tenures

Land tenancy is increasing, farm ownership is concentrating in the hands of non-resident land owners, a condition which from historic precedent presages declining national virility and, if not checked, ultimately a feudal peasantry. An independent, successful and permanent agriculture with the essential schools, churches, and social facilities, cannot be maintained on the basis of absentee ownership. Its inevitable end is not only a social cleavage which is opposed to the principles of our American democracy but another new and dangerous line of industrial cleavage and conflict. A permanent agriculture must be predicated on voluntary home owning farmers politically free, socially satisfied and economically independent.

Farm Depopulation

The farmers' efforts to secure higher wages or better working conditions are not based on an organized refusal to work. His environment gives him those qualities which make him sought by many other occupations and professions. Banks, factories, stores, transportation and commerce call to him to come to them, and the professions make their fine appeal. In the quiet of his home with his family about him his boy or girl decides to heed that call. One more family has left the army of food producers and another family has joined the army of food consumers.

Financing Agriculture

The availability of capital used in agriculture is a matter of public concern. Direct extension of federal credit through the land banks will reduce the cost of this capital and should be made easier of access to all farmers. Associated credits of farm communities should be developed under proper laws and leadership.

Conclusion

These principles presented by the representatives of agriculture in the Industrial Conference and transmitted by the employers group are believed to be not only vital to agriculture, but vital to the common good. The highest concept of government in a democracy is to co-ordinate the functions of all its parts into a perfect and symmetrical whole. In the case of the individual the mind wisely protects physical well being and produces proper physical and mental balance. Theoretically, democratic government does this for all its people. In practice, however, certain members through intensive organizations acquire and exercise undue influence, destroying thereby the harmony which should exist between all the essential elements. The situation which has brought about this conference is due to lack of recognition of this basic duty of government. Agriculture comes into this Industrial Conference seeking to give practical expression to this idea. The representatives of agriculture believe that Capital, Labor and Agriculture are the three principal members of the industrial body and must have equal rights and equal treatment.

Farmers aware of the disparity which has arisen are earnestly endeavoring through their organizations to secure for agriculture its proper field of influence in this triumvirate so that all may be subjected to the welfare of the whole, contending the while that influence and activity developed within the ranks of agriculture are superior to paternalism of any kind and the only adequate means of developing its innate strength and power.

The ideal way of washing delicate things is the way the Eden washes everything

Wouldn't it be ideal to wash everything without rubbing — wouldn't all your clothes and blankets and linens last enough longer to make the machine that could wash them that way a mighty good investment?

The Eden

washes everything in the same ideal way a woman uses to clean a bit of lace or silk. The big sanitary zinc cylinder of the Eden lifts the wash up and down through hot suds countless times as gently as you wash your most delicate garments. It takes the rub out of the tub—the ache out of your back—and pays for itself in its cash savings.

Ask for free trial in your home

Telephone us to send you an Eden on free trial without obligation or expense. After using it with your own washing, you can buy it if you want to in the same easy time-payment way that Liberty Bonds were bought.

The safety interlocking swinging wringer locks into six positions.

Hamilton's Hardware

PULLMAN HERALD, ONE YEAR FOR \$1.50

PRINCE ALBERT

the national joy smoke

NO use arguing about it, or making chin-music in a minor key! If you've got the jimmy-pipe or cigarette makin's notion cornered in your smokeappetite, slip it a few liberal loads of Prince Albert!

Boiled down to regular old between-us-man-talk, Prince Albert kicks the "pip" right out of a pipe! Puts pipe pleasure into the 24-hours-a-day joy's class! Makes cigarette rolling the toppest of sports! P. A. is so fragrant, so fascinating in flavor, so refreshing!

Prince Albert can't bite your tongue or parch your throat! You go as far as you like according to your smoke spirit! Our exclusive patented process cuts out bite and parch!

Tippy red bags, tidy red tins, handsome pound and half-pound tin humidors—and—that classy, practical pound crystal glass humidor with sponge moistener top that keeps the tobacco in such perfect condition.

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, N. C.