

War Budgets and Picket Lines

THE PRESIDENT WANTS 53 billion dollars for war. Mrs. Roosevelt says, right or wrong, she cannot cross a picket line.

The war and Mrs. Roosevelt's statement are not so unrelated as might at first appear. Both spring from a common cause—ignorance. Ignorance of the eternal truth that the good God made the earth for *all* His children, and not for a favored few.

When it is recognized that all nations have equal rights of access to the raw materials of the earth, wherever located, one of the chief causes of war between nations will have disappeared. When it is recognized that all men have equal rights of access to the earth, to the land on which and from which all must live, the principal cause of labor strife, competition for jobs, will largely have disappeared.

When denial of equality of opportunity, whether among nations or individuals, no longer exists, and when men the world over are free not only to produce but to trade at will, the need for a defense line will be as rare as the need for a picket line.

Georgists will stand squarely behind the President. But they will not cease to deplore the economic illiteracy that has brought about this worldwide conflagration, nor will they blind themselves to the state of things at the moment.

With the Federal debt already up to 58 billion dollars, the government proposes to spend 53 billions for war in the coming fiscal year. Higher and still higher taxes to defray part of the increased outlay are inevitable. Costs of running the government and fighting the Axis have become so high that there is scant hope of obtaining more than a fraction of expenditures from taxes.

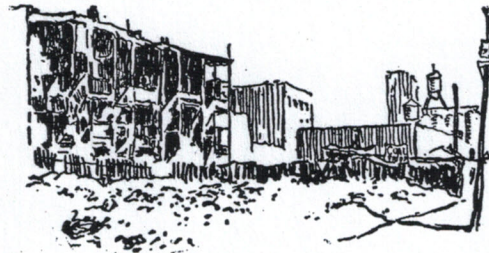
War costs for the year will be one and one half times the current value of all stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and will so thoroughly eclipse all other peaks in national spending that there is no authentic precedent by which to judge the consequences. The influence of our economy will be profound. It is not a situation to be regarded with complacency.

But we are in the war, the war that is to decide whether the world is to be slave or free. We did not choose this war; it was thrust upon us. Now that we are in it, the time for argument and debate has passed. It has already been demonstrated that the nations with which we are united could not by themselves have won the war.

It is no exaggeration to say that the fight to conquer the forces that would enslave us will be

fought not only upon the high seas and far flung battlefields, but upon the farms and assembly lines of America. It isn't 53 billion dollars that the President wants; it is 53 billion *dollars' worth of production*. That means the greatest mass effort in all history.

Mrs. Roosevelt's position is something else again. It is difficult to see how her support of the picket line, "right or wrong," can mean anything but that the group with which she has chosen to align herself must have its way regardless of the rights of others.



It is that attitude which has done so much to bring the cause of labor into disrepute in recent years. It is that attitude, magnified to national proportions, which causes wars. It is an attitude which implies a tragic ignorance of the simple economic truth that wages come out of production and do not have to be pried out or wrung out, by fair means or foul, from some rapacious employer.

As was subsequently revealed in the press, the picket line which occasioned the observation that now promises to become historic was established in an effort to compel the employment of completely unneeded "stand-in" workers. Nothing comes readily to mind that would seem more calculated to thwart production at the very time when the capacity of every man, woman and child in America is needed as never before in our nation's history.

C. O. STEELE

Legacy to the Future

A CORRESPONDENT evaluates the present generation's bequest to its successor thus:

- The world's worst depression.
- The biggest national debt.
- The nation's highest tax burden.
- The cruelest war in history.