

PLAIN TALK *by Jerome Joachim*

A labor lawyer, speaking for the UAW over the radio, made a dramatic reply to General Dwight Eisenhower's speech against the welfare state.

"Labor has as much right to desire a welfare state as Eisenhower has a right to want his \$18,000 annual pension" was the basis for the speaker's well worded appeal.

To which we all agree. If, by merely passing the right laws, every American could be assured of future security I would be the first to advocate such laws!

If, by taking *all* of what our more capable citizens earn above the average income, we could benefit the *average* person, I would heartily approve.

But all history indicates that when we try to equalize incomes we merely decrease production and *lower* the income of *all* groups.

All men want security. But such security as man has known has come only from his productive effort. By inferring that it can come through legislation is but to destroy the drive that has caused men to create a better world. And to thus destroy mankind's real opportunity for advancement while at the same time destroying his freedom is the greatest crime that has ever been perpetrated against our civilization.

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting with a group of executives and workmen in a small plant in Hillside, Illinois. This group is interested in making a fundamental inquiry into our economic system to determine whether the measures we are enacting from time to time will effect the objectives which men expect from life on this planet.

Included in the group were truck drivers, janitors, foremen, the plant superintendent and the boss's own son, probably the only college graduate in the lot. In such a group I naturally felt that many would feel that the new measures adopted by our government to create security would give them a feeling of "all rightness" such as men did not know a generation back.

Instead I discovered that most of these men, including the least educated, realized that the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation is in no



position to guarantee the people that they will receive tangible goods and services when they want them. They scoffed at the idea that Social Security will provide for them in their old age. Minimum Wage Laws were to them merely a device to help increase the cost of production, and were no guarantee that the least skillful would ever enjoy a better

standard of living.

These men realized, better than I supposed they would, that security could not be achieved through the enactment of laws—especially laws which tended to decrease production. They also realized that a million dollars wouldn't buy even one small potato, if no potatoes were raised, and that giving people more money, without increasing production, was like pouring water into a sieve.

But, universally, they felt that somehow production could be increased and that plans which would increase production could result in a better life for them. They even scoffed at the Marshall Plan and the idea that we could become richer by giving away millions of dollars' worth of our wealth for nothing. The opinion seemed to be that if we produced a great deal and encouraged production they would fare better than by decreasing or restricting production. They unanimously agreed that no one would improve his lot by striking, and were of the impression that Lewis's coal miners would gain nothing from the sacrifices which they had made during the past year.

Such reasoning on the part of men, most of whom have only a faint idea of what economics means, was one of the most pleasant experiences I have had in many months. And it convinces me more than ever that our next great leader will be a man who says, positively, that no one can benefit from any method by which he hopes to get more by withholding his talents and his labors.

The sooner we find someone who is willing to frankly tell the people that it is impossible to get "something for nothing" the sooner will we reverse our trend toward the decay which socialism and communism are bringing to this world!