

INDUSTRIALISTS PLAN PRISON LABOR CAMP

MANUFACTURERS TO ESTABLISH GREEN LAKES SITE FOR GERMAN WORKERS

The Herald-Journal, Syracuse, NY, Friday, December 22, 1944

The Manufacturers Association of Syracuse plans to organize a non-profit membership corporation to establish a camp for German prisoner of war labor at the former CCC camp at Green Lakes State Park, and has earmarked \$10,000 for this purpose.

A definite decision to proceed with the establishment of a camp was made at a meeting of directors of the association at the Chamber of Commerce yesterday afternoon but arrangements were left with the executive committee, which was given power to act.

The Army requires a minimum of 100 workers at a prisoner of war camp. The former CCC camp at present, after minor rehabilitation and the erection of a fence, could house 250 working prisoners.

Part of the cost of establishing the camp could be amortized from deductions allowed by the government from the gross income of the camp.

At the present time about 50 prisoners are employed in the city while another plant expects to take on 25 after Christmas. These prisoners are now housed at Port Byron.

Between 25 and 30 prisoners could be used in the retail, financial service and distribution businesses in Syracuse, it was reported at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce Manpower Utilization Committee yesterday afternoon.

A subcommittee headed by Howard F. Zinsmeister was appointed to confer with the Manufacturers' Association relative to the establishment of a prisoner of war camp. Other members of the subcommittee are John I. Deves, Arthur J. Quinn, Albert W. Evans, Robert R. Molyneux and James F. Gilday.

H. F. Hodgkins, president of the Manufacturers' Association of Syracuse, issued the following statement:

"At its meeting yesterday the board of directors of the Manufacturers' Association of Syracuse considered the proposals of the Army War Production Board and War Manpower Commission that utilization be made of German war prisoners in certain manufacturing and civilian service enterprises as permitted by the International Geneva Treaty.

"While war prisoners cannot be used in many of the plants which comprise the association's membership, manufacturers recognize the vital need of maintaining services for their employes [*sic*] and the public on the part of hotels, retail and fuel establishments, laundries, bakeries, hospitals, etc.

"Therefore, the Manufacturers' Association will survey the community's potential need for war prisoners' services and if such is found to warrant the action, the association will lend its facilities to the community to

establish an agency to handle the community's interests with the Federal government.

“This interest on the part of the Manufacturers' Association is solely to speed the war effort, and the use of war prisoners or other foreign labor will not be

tolerated a moment beyond the time when the jobs which they may fill can be taken over by returning veterans or free American labor. The manufacturers' move is not of their own choice, but is in compliance with the proposals of Federal agencies, based on our severe labor shortage in war and civilian effort alike.”