

NEW FACTORY NEEDS OFFSET LABOR GAINS

CORCORAN CALLS USE OF JAMAICANS, WAR CAPTIVES ONLY SOLUTION

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Additional demands for labor arising from the award of new contracts to Syracuse war industries have offset progress made in solving the city's critical labor shortage, it was reported last night.

Latest developments are:

1. Eight hundred workers needed in "must" plants and 3,300 in essential industry.
2. Establishment of a Syracuse prisoner of war camp is under consideration.
3. Second camp for Jamaican workers established at Army Air Base.
4. Men released from Brown-Lipe-Chapin plant to be placed in other plants.
5. Chamber of Commerce to survey manpower shortages.
6. Labor division representatives assigned to area War Production Board.
7. Labor to be channeled from less essential plants.
8. Few workers are now leaving essential industry.

Greater use of Jamaicans and prisoners of war is the only solution for Syracuse's critical labor shortage in the opinion of Thomas J. Corcoran, area director of the War Manpower Commission, who last night reported little change in the labor situation.

"True, we made some progress last week," he said, "but this was offset by new demands for labor. We still need about 800 workers in "must" plants and about 3,300 in essential industry.

"War prisoners cannot be used in war plants under terms of the Geneva Convention, but they can be used in essential civilian plants and in non-essential plants, thus releasing men in these plants for war work."

Lt. I. T. Bergman, officer in charge of the labor branch, District 3, Second Service Command, reported the Army is encouraging the use of war prisoners wherever possible.

"If management and labor can agree on plants where prisoners could be used and could guarantee the use of sufficient number, 100 or more, this would warrant the establishment of a prisoner of war camp at the former CCC camp at Green Lakes State Park, which has been under consideration," he said.

"The Army wants to use prisoners to the maximum extent. A camp with 200 to 250 working prisoners could be established. The use of these prisoners in essential civilian, or in non-essential plants would allow these plants to negotiate a loan of some of their workers to war plants.

"Prisoners could be used only as long as the labor shortages existed. They can be placed only upon certification of need by the War Manpower Commission. As soon as Syracuse solves the problem and the WMC withdraws its certification, the prisoners would be removed from the plants.

“Establishment of a camp would make possible use of the prisoners as long as the emergency exists. Prisoners now brought in from Port Byron will have to go back to agriculture or food processing if ??? which has first call upon their services, as soon as they are needed.

“The Army encourages the application by plants for the use of war prisoners. Applications should be directed to the commanding officer in charge of District 3 marked for my attention. Then if WMC certifies the need for prisoners, the Army will decide whether the plant is a proper place for war prisoners under terms of the Geneva treaty.

NON-PROFIT GROUP

“The prison camp would be set up by employers as a cooperative non-profit group. Part of the cost would be amortized by deductions from the gross income to the Army.

“The government is paid prevailing wages in the plant for war prisoners. Workers replaced by prisoners and loaned to war plants retain all their rights in the plants they leave. There has been no complaint from labor in plants where prisoners are used.

Several plants in addition to those now using war prisoners have made applications which are now being processed. Bergman said. Applications have been made for prisoners as laborers in making civilian products and for maintenance work. At Straight Line Foundry and Machine Corporation which makes civilian machine parts, they are employed as laborers.

Corcoran revealed a second camp of Jamaicans has been established at the Syracuse Army Air Base about two miles from the first camp.

Over the week-end 40 Jamaicans for the Crucible Steel Company and 20 for Syracuse Chilled plow will be brought in to join the approximately 37 who are working at several small plants in the city.

The camp manager will meet Tuesday afternoon with factory representatives to man final plans for employment, housing and feeding. The employer provides housing and food, cost of which is deducted from the employes' [*sic*] pay.

Jamaicans employed by Oberdorfer Foundry and the U. S. Hoffman Company are housed at the first camp at the Air Base while Jamaicans employed by the Iroquois Pottery Company are housed by the Salvation Army.

Applications for additional Jamaicans are pending but the available supply is rapidly dwindling Corcoran said.

The War Production Board has ordered Michael Wilsey, of the labor division, who has been in charge in the Utica area, to include the Syracuse area office in his jurisdiction. He is assisting in the program to get needed men into the “must” plants.

AGENCIES COOPERATE

All agencies are cooperating to place 385 men who are to be released from the Brown-Lipe-Chapin Division of General Motors into other plants in jobs of the same skill and pay. These men will not be thrown on the labor market.

Progress in solving the labor problem was reported by Corcoran who said WMC was receiving good reception for the plan to channel labor from less essential to essential plants. "Some men will be transferred." He said. "We are finding a wider acceptance of the labor stabilization program and are discovering that few people are now leaving essential industry.

A newly created committee of Chamber of Commerce will conduct a survey of retail, financial, service and distribution businesses in Syracuse to determine the present manpower situation and decide if it is practicable to use Jamaicans or prisoners of war to relieve any other existing manpower shortages.

The survey is designed also to determine the number of workers who might be spared from less essential industry to take temporary jobs in war plants.

Dennis F. Sullivan, district supervisor; Darl O. Nail, manager of the Syracuse U. S. Employment Service, and Thomas F. Kernan of the War Manpower Commission, spoke at the meeting called by Frederick A. Norton, secretary of the Chamber, when the manpower situation was reviewed and purposes of the survey outlined.

The manpower utilization committee was appointed after a meeting of businessman with Army, Navy and War Manpower Commission representatives earlier in the week, when the call for "must" war workers turned up an actual shortage in many less essential industries. An accurate appraisal of the situation is expected from the committee, which will report Dec. 23.

Members of the committee are Christopher J. Auert, Newton D. Bartle, Darwin F. Clark, George W. Dawson, John L. Debes, Albert W. Evans, Clarence A. Fannin, James F. Gilday, Albert T. Hollenbeck, Jacob S. Isaacs, L. E. Kitch, C.E. Knight, Anthony s. Mollica, Robert R. Molyneaux, Arthur J. Quinn, James H. Reedy, Carl C. Rossell, W. S. Ware, M. E. Zinsmeister.