

Objectives in the Programming of Post-war Sanitation Works*

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WE are now engaged in a great war that is testing our capacity to produce, to arm, and to conquer. Because of the success of their planning, we may never know how much we owe to military staff groups who through the years of peace have prepared the blueprints of war. But when military objectives are won, plans will be needed to guide us upon our return to a peacetime economy. We can lose the peace on the home front through a lack of preparedness.

Our battles are being won because military men with a vision stayed with their planning despite the popular belief that war would be no more. It was not easy for them to go counter to the wishful thinking of a nation that wanted peace—and it will not be easy now to gain popular support for the staff work that must be done in the preparation for peace. Unlike the plans for war, the plans for peace must be of, for, and by the people, and acceptable to the majority. It is proper that we should be concerned with the problems of the post-war period and attempt to analyze the conditions that may give rise to emergency situations, and to find in advance solutions for them.

There are those who have questioned the ability of a democracy to meet emergency problems without resorting

to the direct action procedure of the dictator. The fallacy of their reasoning lies in their failure to recognize our freedom to anticipate emergencies—and by planning their solution in advance to remove the emergency character of their occurrences. We are not regimented when we plan together for our mutual good.

One of the fundamental principles that give strength to our democracy is the recognition it gives to the freedom of the individual citizen to join with his fellows in the formulation of such governmental policies as may be acceptable to the majority of the group.

The problems of post-war reorganization will retain their emergency character only to the extent that we fail now to anticipate them. This nation can ill afford the social and economic loss that must come if we leave to emergency salvage measures plans for the proper utilization of the most valuable of all our nation's resources—its man power.

Past experience has indicated the value of a public works construction program as a means of providing employment during a period of economic depression. It is therefore logical that our plans for the future should have incorporated in them proposals for the use of this method of employment stabilization. It is easy to classify long lists of needed public works and to envision the material changes that can be brought about by their construction.

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