

RADIO SPEECH - WLOL - SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 1946

There have been many items of community interest in the news this past week. Your City Government has directed its attention for such matters as a Smoke Prevention Program, Veterans' Employment, Veterans' Housing, Traffic Control, Expanded Park and Recreation Facilities, and Airport Development. Today I'd like to discuss with you briefly just a few of these items and draw to your attention some of the nature of the problem, and what we are attempting to do about it.

I think all of us would agree that the No. 1 problem confronting every returned service man is that of a job opportunity, or the opportunity of entering into some new business or profession. Recently I called a Veterans' Employment Conference, which included representatives of business in Minneapolis, State Veterans Employment officers, and several officials of the Minneapolis office of the U.S.E.S. The purpose of this Conference was to consider what steps might be taken to strengthen existing facilities now serving the returned service man in the matter of job placements. This Conference was called because every day it becomes more apparent that we have a growing problem of unemployment among veterans. With approximately 60% of Minneapolis service men returned from the armed services, there are already an estimated 11,000 unemployed veterans in Minneapolis. This figure stands out as a challenge to every person in this community.

As I have stated over this program before, real victories can never be claimed by our people and nation until every man who served his country has been given the opportunity for gainful employment at a decent wage, or a business opportunity and the security which comes with being a part of a community and participating in its enterprises.

Veterans' problems and their relationship to their government is one of our immediate and most pressing jobs. With this in mind, I have added to the staff of the mayor's office a veterans' representative. Unfortunately our budget does not permit the employment of a full-time person, so I have obtained the

assistance of a close friend and a highly trained person in the field of veterans' rehabilitation and employment to serve in a part-time job. The man I refer to is a former captain in the United States Marine Corps, who has a distinguished service record, and after being wounded in combat and returned to the States, served as one of the Marine Corps employment and rehabilitation officers in the national headquarters at Washington, D. C. This person is Mr. Orville Freeman.

Mr. Freeman has studied the existing facilities in the field of job placement. He has reported to my office the need for appropriate action to strengthen job placement services now serving the Minneapolis veteran. You see, the Minneapolis veterans do not want to draw merely readjustment allowances. They want to work. Furthermore, among these unemployed are men with excellent training in a large number of technical and service fields. Military experience has sharpened their sense of values and increased their capacity for cooperation and teamwork.

I know you all realize that the problem of veteran employment is a community problem, and until everything possible has been done to further the readjustment of veterans to civilian life, the Minneapolis community has not discharged its full responsibility. Getting a job is probably the most important single factor in accomplishing this readjustment. It is apparent that Minneapolis can do much more than it has to date in solving this employment problem.

It is true, we can't individually create many new jobs, but we can make certain that efficient job placement practices are followed. Nothing is more disillusioning and contributes more to bitter resentment in the veteran than going from place to place, day after day, in search of work. This so-called veterans' run around must be avoided in Minneapolis at all costs. It is bad for the veteran, bad for business, and bad for the community.

With these thoughts in mind, the mayor's office has attempted to bring a closer working relationship between business establishments in this City and the U.S.E.S., along with the private employment agencies. The U.S.E.S. by federal law has the responsibility of assisting the veteran in finding employment. Efficient

techniques of job analysis and placement have been developed over a period of many years of operation. Nevertheless, many a business firm does not use the Employment Service facilities for securing new workers, which oftentimes means that the veteran who has registered at the Employment Service is not referred to a prospective job opportunity.

I call upon all businessmen in this City to work closely with the U.S.E.S. in the matter of veterans' employment. I have urged that there be the closest cooperation between the U.S.E.S. and the private employment agencies in the placement of veterans. The recommendations of this first Conference were forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Veterans Information and Referral Center.

It has been recommended that a special Veteran's Employment Committee be established in this City. It has been further recommended that this Veterans' Employment Committee concentrate its full effort upon coordinating the existing job placement facilities so that our returned service men have quick access to every job opportunity. We have the community organization to do this work, and it is my belief that the Veterans' Information and Referral Center, along with its Executive Committee, will formulate a program that will attack this matter of unemployment of veterans in a successful manner and promote increased job opportunities.



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