

tification, in naming this Board, to find all sections of organized labor united in a determination to lay aside distinctions of any kind in a desire to evolve plans that would guarantee the greatest unity of action, and the most complete efficiency in production. The first meeting of this Board, held in our office at Annapolis, gave unqualified assurance of the desire of the people of Maryland to exert every effort in the furtherance of the war effort. The members of the Commission pledged their whole-hearted determination to advance every interest for all-out production, and to throw their strength against any efforts towards work stoppage in defense undertakings.

As a result of the first meeting of the Maryland Labor Victory Board I was able to assure Donald M. Nelson, Director of the War Production Board, that Maryland was all out for production and that we proposed to report to him, periodically, concerning the increases in production that would be forthcoming as a result of the more complete unity to be achieved through the efforts of the Labor Victory Board.

Interesting, too, in connection with the first meeting of the Labor Victory Board, was the suggestion advanced that individual production soldiers who have displayed unusual efficiency might be rewarded with some insignia, just as their brothers in the armed forces are given merited recognition. This suggestion was given a hearty welcome by the War Production Board, and I am informed that the Board now has completed a plan to make individual awards to war production workers, much in the same manner suggested by us.

The fundamental idea of the plan is that men at work in the war plants can contribute to increase production through suggestions for improvement of manufacturing processes and for conservation of materials and effort. The plan will include a number of awards to be made for suggestions that actually improve production. Consideration is also being given by the War Production Board to other means of recognizing outstanding contributions by the men on the production line.

That there is the utmost reason for every last ounce of effort that the Production Soldier can put forward, is clearly evident to everyone who considers for a moment the condition of labor not only in the conquered countries of Europe but even in the Reich itself. There, conquered and supposed conquerors alike, have found their every right pre-empted by the militarists who are making their final desperate bid for domination of the world. While they have lost every vestige of rights and privileges, here in America the cause of labor is steadily advancing, and even under the necessities of war there is little real threat to the preservation of any of the gains that labor has made.

Ask Hitler's workers what will be their compensation if they find themselves unable to continue to perform the tasks assigned to them. Contrast conditions there to those in our own State where, for instance, we have paid out from the Unemployment Compensation Fund to date 3,072,477 checks, totalling \$29,026,326.52 in benefits. There are now covered under the Maryland Act approximately 13,000 employers and more than half a million employees. During the first quarter of 1942, collections to date were \$5,300,000 and the