

RESOLUTION No. 1—S. F. No. 67.

A concurrent resolution memorializing the President and Congress of the United States, and the federal authorities concerned, to act immediately to relieve the present distress of agriculture and farm labor and its effect upon food production in connection with the prosecution of the war.

WHEREAS, war and world conditions have placed upon all industries a great challenge, involving maximum production to meet the needs of our armed forces and those of our allies, and

WHEREAS, the production of food is of the greatest importance and because of depleted manpower on our farms, lack of farm machinery, unfavorable priority rulings and inability to compete in labor markets, agriculture is unable to meet the demands now made upon it,

THEREFORE, we respectfully submit the following facts setting forth the position of agriculture:

(1) Milk, butter, cheese, meat, poultry, and vegetables are vital war foods of which there is now a shortage;

(2) These are the foods which require a comparatively large amount of manpower in man hours of work to produce:

(3) They require skilled labor on a year round basis as contrasted to peak harvest time and seasonal demands;

(4) The manpower on the farms of Minnesota has already been seriously depleted;

(a) Thousands of men have gone into our armed forces;

(b) A considerable number of Minnesota farm laborers have gone into defense industries;

(c) This transition of labor has been brought on in part by the prevailing high wages and overtime paid in these defense industries;

(d) Farmers cannot compete with the prevailing high wages thus paid;

(e) This automatically results in shortage of farm labor as well as a reduction in manpower hours for the nation as a whole.

(5) Since we are collectively engaged in a common struggle of winning the war, we urge that we share the sacrifices of the soldiers at the front, by foregoing special privileges whether we be laborers in the war industries or producers on the farms; that our loyalty and patriotism should find expression in a willingness

to work longer hours, to the end that production may be intensified and the war quickly won;

(6) Inasmuch as farm labor must be experienced and specialized, the general solution of the farm labor problem therefore, can partially be solved by the release of men from our armed forces and defense industries, who are experienced in farm labor:

(7) The farm labor problem can be further solved by release of essential farm machinery, repairs and repairing material, which is a direct step toward replacing necessary man hours on the farm. Much of the red tape now required by the Government at Washington should be eliminated and more authority delegated to the local agencies to handle these problems.

(8) Electricity being a fundamental factor in increasing production on our farms, we urge that the War Production Board modify existing regulations that will permit the use of materials supplying electricity to farmers along existing lines.

The above analysis of our farm problems coupled with a profound desire to do everything in our power to aid our government in promoting policies most urgent to achieve victory in war, and after the war, to aid in reconstruction, prompts the Legislature of the State of Minnesota to urgently resolve that the Congress of the United States give immediate attention to these most pressing problems involving agriculture as well as the well being of our entire nation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we earnestly petition the President and Congress of the United States and all other national agencies concerned, to immediately correct these existing conditions as set forth in this resolution, adversely affecting agriculture in Minnesota, and thus hampering our efforts to sustain our nation with food supplies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we do earnestly petition the President and Congress of the United States specifically to bring to the attention of the War Manpower Commission and Selective Service the existing plight of agriculture, to the end that the present policies of these agencies be immediately modified so as to prevent further depletion of skilled farm labor and the consequent impairment of necessary food supply.

Filed January 28, 1943.