

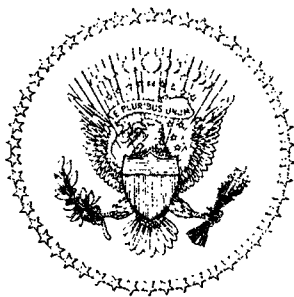
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OF THE UNITED STATES

Harry S. Truman

*Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and
Statements of the President*

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164 Statement by the President Summarizing Reconversion Progress. July 11, 1946

IT IS a good thing, from time to time, for all of us to take stock of the progress we have made toward our peacetime domestic goal of sustained full production and full employment.

John R. Steelman's report on reconversion¹ sets forth some facts and figures which a good many people have been inclined to overlook in the heat of debate. Up to June 30 the setbacks which we suffered had been disproportionately magnified.

The facts are that:

Production by mid-year reached the highest level ever attained in peacetime.

More people are working now than ever before—four and a half million more than in 1941, our highest prewar year. Particularly gratifying is the fact that eight out of every ten returned veterans already have jobs; but we shall not be satisfied until the rest of our veterans have suitable employment opportunities. The number of people looking for work was only slightly above two and a half million by the end of June.

Although public attention was focused on the soft-coal and railroad strikes, the great majority of workers remained on their jobs. Fewer man days of idleness due to industrial disputes were recorded during the last quarter than in the first three months of this year.

Our people are earning more money and they are purchasing a greater volume of goods than ever before in peacetime.

We are meeting in full our commitments

to ship food to the starving peoples of the world.

We have made more progress than many thought possible toward providing new houses for our people.

Certainly, up to this point runaway inflation has been prevented.

But as the seventh report of the Reconversion Director points out, all of the ground we have so laboriously won against inflation will be irretrievably lost without a workable price control law. Every day that passes without a law on the books increases that danger.

The Administration is determined to do everything within its power, under the authority granted by the Congress, to maintain the gains we have made and to continue moving toward our goal.

To this end, I have directed Mr. Steelman to coordinate to the fullest extent the activities of the executive agencies of the Government which can assist both industry and labor to attain the high volume of production necessary to ward off inflation.

To supplement pending price control measures, the Administration is reviewing its fiscal and monetary policies. Government expenditures will be reduced. All deferrable construction and public works projects using Federal funds will be studied with a view to saving strategic materials and diminishing inflationary pressures. Military and veterans program costs which have been rising above earlier estimates will be reviewed to determine where they can be reduced without endangering national security or causing unjustified hardship. All these measures are necessary but they are no substitute for specific price control until full production is attained.

¹ "At the Crossroads, Seventh Report to the President, the Senate & the House of Representatives, by the Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion," July 1, 1946 (Government Printing Office, 1946, 69 pp.).