

PATHEINDER

DIGEST OF  WORLD AFFAIRS

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NRA Has Teeth— and Will Use Them if Provoked Too Much

THE price gougers and chisellers are at work in full force, just as the conscienceless profiteers and slackers were during the World war. The Recovery law has “teeth”—but it is to be hoped that it will not be necessary to use them, for the basic motive of the program is co-operation, and not coercion.

Let us examine some of the “teeth”: First, the Recovery law includes everything and everybody; there are “no exceptions,” the administrators say. Next, when the great majority in any industry or group (and this is interpreted as 70 per cent of the total) agree on a code of wages, working hours and fair practices, everybody who expects to continue in business must submit to the provisions of the code.

Next, if an individual rebels against the code provisions, there are ways to make it hot for him. He can be posted as a slacker and virtually boycotted. He may be required to secure a license from the government before he can operate. If he defies the government and goes on operating, he is subject to a fine of \$500 and six months in prison. And these penalties are applied for each and every day that he defies the law. Each day is a separate offense—the intention being to make it impossible for such a rebel to continue in business.

Uncle Sam found it was impossible to enforce prohibition, even though an army of enforcing officers were employed. Hence he has no intention of taking on such a job as enforcing the Recovery law himself. That would be a thousand times bigger job. The Recovery law is to be administered and enforced in each particular industry by that industry itself. The “policing” is to be done by the associations which are being organized. These organizations must have central offices and officials of their own choosing, and the concerns covered by the code will pay the expenses of

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these trade associations. As a temporary measure, "compliance boards" are being set up in each locality. These local committees are to hear complaints of code violations and do what they can to iron out any difficulties. However, they are warned not to assume too much authority and to report all serious cases to Washington. The bulk of the complaints so far have been against failures to pay the wages or reduce working hours as promised in the codes. Even some of the very big employers have thought up tricks to cheat the codes. Chain store clerks for instance are made to work extra time, outside of the regulation hours which they ring up on the time clock.

Many complaints are being made that retail prices have been boosted far beyond the point justified by the added labor and other costs required by the codes. All these things are being watched by the eagle eye of the NRA and in due time they will be dealt with.

Consumers are supposed to be one of the parties to the Recovery program; in fact some folks believe that they ought to have been thought of first, seeing it's their money that's being spent. But the other interests have been so much better represented than the consumers that so far the consumers seem to have been left out of the picture.



Chiseler—Granra, what makes your eyes so big?

Granra—To see you the better, my dear!

Chiseler—What makes your ears so big?

Granra—To hear you the better!!

Chiseler—And what makes your teeth so big, Granra?

Granra—To eat you up!!!