

Man Power from U.S. : 9208/20/41

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September 22nd, 1941

Dear Walter,

There is one subject which concerns a good many departments over here, namely, the question of the use of British and American man-power from the United States.

From the public relations point of view, the situation is that, judging from the reports in the English newspapers, England is short of all kinds of man-power, both technical, manual and office, and both male and female, that in order to remedy this shortage, persons are being called on to register for national service and that non-essential industries are being stripped to the minimum. The situation over here is that the United States Government is being approached in various ways for the use of their man-power; at the present moment these demands are mostly in the technical sphere. As regards British subjects in this country, the position is that by English law they are not subject to military service, labour service, exchange regulations, or income tax. This creates an unfortunate impression in Americans, who find that nationals of other countries are subject by their national law to military service in the countries of which they are subjects. In the case of income tax, Americans resident abroad have to pay American income tax, except on their salaries, as well as in the country of residence, while British subjects in America are free of any such tax liability. I am hoping that the Ambassador will take this aspect of the case up when he is in England, with my suggestion that British subjects should at least pay the difference between the rate of tax, local and Federal paid by them in the country in which they reside, and the rate on which tax would be levied on their income in England.

As regards the man-power situation, I suggest that it is very important from the point of view of public relations and in view of the increasing demands we shall be making on American man-power, that we pass laws making all British subjects all over the world liable to military and labour service. While I realize that this law cannot be enforced in a foreign country without the assistance of such a foreign country, it is, I think, clear that we would get considerable assistance in the United States for the enforcement of such laws. There are too many British subjects roaming about the United States and South America who

Sir Walter Monckton, M.C.V.O.,
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create ...

create a bad impression by spending lavishly and not helping in the war effort. On the other hand, legislation will be of no use unless we devise a satisfactory system for enrolling such people and providing for their dependents. At the present moment, there are a large number of British subjects in the United States who are only too willing to help in the war effort, but who are not qualified in any technical capacity, though they may possess important professional qualifications. There is no machinery by which they may be engaged and sent over to England at Government expense, or by which provision might be made for their families. I have started an index of all British subjects who have offered to help in the war effort, which is being compiled by an American volunteer and his secretary. Already the list has several hundred names, and I have no doubt that if suitable publicity were given to the need in England for all classes of man-power, there would be a large response from the considerable British population in this country. For instance, there are a certain number of accountants, journalists etc., classified in the index who, I feel sure, would be useful in England as accountants in a munition factory or administrative officers in the Services, or as clerks in the Ministry of Pensions, etc. You would, I think, be surprised by the amount of good material we have in the United States, which unfortunately cannot be used, and I feel sure that if the Minister of Labour, if he is the person responsible for the use of Britain's man-power, knew about the resources in this country, he would take steps to utilise them before appealing to the Americans who, it is to be anticipated, will ask us to put our own house in order first.

The above shows that there are really two problems: one, the use of the worth-while British subjects who wish to help in the war effort, and 2) the control of the less desirable elements by extra-territorial legislation.

The next problem is the intelligent use of the American voluntary man-power. It is quite a common experience for all English departments to receive offers by Americans of their services for use in England or the British Embassy. It is always a matter of "hit and miss" whether these services can be used and in the majority of cases I am afraid they are politely told that there is no suitable employment at the moment. Here again, I would suggest that some steps be taken to set up an organisation over here which could employ non-technical persons who would be of use in the war effort.

The trouble in both cases seems to me that London is afraid to delegate. There is considerable shortage of man-power; it could be partially filled by the recruitment of British and Americans over here but no machinery exists except in the technical and Service spheres.

As regards the controlling of the less desirable British elements, there are a good many sanctions which can be applied in this country and others where no local assistance would be refused; e.g. deprivation of passports, revocation of nationality and black-listing with British, allied and friendly firms and authorities.

Yours ever,

JP:CC

JOHN FOSTER

stimulating the ...
the C.I.O. remains under ...
afterwards. Mr. Hopkins proceeded to England and discussed with