

The nature of the textile industry is such, however, that in spite of the greatly increased productivity per manhour, neither the wage increments nor the numbers employed are properly reflected in the most recent statistics.

At the same time, it cannot be overlooked that the industry employs a higher number of women than other manufacturing operations and that more and more members of minorities, especially in the unskilled or less skilled categories, are entering into the textile field.

In 1966, more than 425,000 women were employed in the mills, or about 45% of the industry's employees, as compared to about 27% ratio in all manufacturing.

Negro employment in the industry rose from about 25,000 in 1940 to 44,000 in 1966, or percentage-wise from 2.1 to 4.6 of the total workers in the industry.

In recent years, according to the *Monthly Labor Review*, the textile industry has had to compete mostly for male labor with higher-paying enterprises which have also been moving to the South.

And in some sections of the country there are acute shortages of available labor for various sectors of the textile industry.

If these recent trends continue, and are accelerated by the elimination of uneconomic mills and plants partly through the competition of imports, this new direction will be all to the good of the American textile workers, for we cannot believe that any United States employee would prefer to work for less than \$2.00 an hour in some outmoded textile factory when more attractive jobs paying \$2.50 an hour is available.

If import competition forces the workers in the uneconomic, uncompetitive, marginal, and obsolete sectors of the textile industry to seek adjustment assistance, at least in the long run this may prove to be advantageous to these workers. For they may find more productive, better paying jobs in more modern plants and factories.

Since import quotas and other protectionists stratagems tends to maintain and subsidize the weaker, more inefficient segments by guaranteeing assured markets, and thereby to continue to "imprison" or "freeze," as it were, relatively poorly paid workers, if freer, nondiscriminatory trade will speed the process whereby these workers may seek and secure adjustment assistance and move on to better jobs, we judge this process to be well worthwhile.

Certainly, in an advanced industrial nation such as ours, labor should be recognized and upgraded in dignity and decency. It will be a sad day for America if to find and keep low-paying jobs for the unskilled and the unemployed it becomes settled government policy to subsidize uneconomic work. In a country where labor is in such high favor, the emphasis should be in improving competitiveness, not in continuing uneconomic manpower wastefulness.

Perhaps what happened in Rhode Island in the past ten years may be instructive, even though their textile workers did not have the advantage of government aid in the form of adjustment assistance.

In a special *New York Times* supplement for May 12, 1968, Adolph T. Schmidt, executive director of the Rhode Island Development Council, recalled that ten years ago, "Rhode Island's economy was seriously depressed. Post-war adjustments had cut textile production in half—and textiles were Rhode Island's dominant industry . . . Today, Rhode Island stands on a plateau of prosperity that was far over the horizon in 1958. Total non-farm jobs have increased by 61,900—rising from a total of 276,800 in 1958 to 338,700 in 1967. This latter figure constitutes an all-time high, even exceeding peak employment during World War II . . . The average manufacturing wage has climbed from \$69.13 in 1958 to a present mark of \$100.94. Per capita income has risen from \$2,042 to \$3,270, and total personal income has added over a billion dollars—rising from \$1,752,000,000 in 1958 to \$2,943,000,000 at the first of the year" (1958).

Company adjustment assistance

If a company, or one of its "appropriate subdivisions" if it is a multi-establishment firm, is found to be eligible for adjustment assistance, it may be authorized technical and financial assistance under the Administration's legislation. Tax assistance is included as a part of financial assistance.

Such adjustment assistance should enable a company or plant or factory to be modernized, to secure the most efficient machinery and equipment, and to find more effective and competitive management.

In an industry as widespread and as massive as textiles, there are bound to be many strong and economic segments, as well as some that are weak and uneconomic. Moreover, there are bound to be many establishments—some large,