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Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

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specified in the early appeals might be cared for. It was three years before this hope was wholly fulfilled; but afterward the Fund grew year by year and the roll of its beneficiaries became ever greater. Its total was maintained even against the conflicting demands of the last war. It has remained high despite the new woes inflicted on humanity in this new conflict and the large sums which kind-hearted Americans have spent in their alleviation.

Charity fails not. The spirit of good neighborliness on this continent will never die, and its exercise begins, as is fitting, near home, as is exemplified in this Fund for the Neediest. There will always be occasion for such a Fund, and THE NEW YORK TIMES is happy to supply one medium between the givers and the benefited. Its columns are still open for contributions to come.

PLANES FROM AUTO PLANTS

The C. I. O. is entitled to insist on a fair and thorough examination of its proposal to produce 500 pursuit planes a day within six months, by utilizing idle plant and adapting existing machines in the automobile industry. It must be said, however, that certain weaknesses in the plan have become more evident on examination.

In the first place, the plan is aimed at mass production of pursuit aircraft, a category in which the aviation industry itself already approaches most nearly large-scale production and a category not nearly so urgently needed, either to bolster Britain or to strengthen our own defenses, as that of bombers. In this matter Mr. Knudsen has told his own industry: "There is no use worrying about light planes—we can get them. On fighting planes we are in pretty fair shape. But bombing planes, from 16,000 pounds up to the heaviest, take time and they must be worked out for real production before we can get quantities." In consequence, plans are being made to utilize important units of the automobile industry for quantity production of bombers by the parts-assembly, subcontracting method. To switch the automobile industry, up to its entire capacity, to manufacture pursuit planes would upset a going undertaking, without furnishing the type of aircraft most needed.

Even if this consideration were to be swept aside, there are other factors in the situation. When it comes to engine production, a large part of the public does not realize the wide difference between the automobile engine and the aircraft power plant. A typical automobile engine, having about 100 horsepower, is not closely limited as to its ratio of weight per horsepower, and for this reason problems of casting and machining are much minimized. An aviation engine for combat aircraft must deliver well in excess of 1,000 horsepower, while individual air-cooled engines of more than 2,000 horsepower have been tested successfully. Every ounce of weight counts. Changes for producing such airplane engines would require complete reconstruction of the machines now used for automobile engine production, including the bases on which the machines are mounted.

Use of idle plant facility, recommended by the C. I. O. proposal, is of course highly desirable, as is the recommendation for the best possible allocation of skilled men. Both are already contemplated by the automobile industry and in part have begun. Other practical suggestions of the proposal doubtless will be adapted by Mr. Knudsen and the mass-production-minded men of the automobile industry. But we should not jump too hastily to the conclusion that we either want or can get 500 combat airplanes a day from automobile plants.