

RANDOM REFLECTIONS

In 1930, I think it was, the then Conservative candidate for Prime Minister of Canada, in a speech to his own constituents, said in effect: "Gentlemen, you are all acquainted with me personally and know that I keep my word. Today there are in this country 100,000 workless people. Such a condition is intolerable and in a country blessed as is Canada totally unnecessary. Now, I give you my word, that if I am elected there will not be one man, able and willing to work, lacking employment." But three years after the gentleman was elected, there were nearly 1,000,000 people unemployed. I think that man was sincere. He just didn't know that if he put that first 100,000 to work at useful, saleable projects, there would not have been any further increase in the number of unemployed and hundreds of millions of dollars needless waste would have been saved to the country.

Every manufacturer is familiar with the problem of overhead, or burden as accountants call it. He knows that he must keep his proportion of indirect labor, office and administrative expense down to a minimum, and he knows that all such charges, including sales and advertising, must be added to his cost of labor and material. Yet how many people realize that the cost of all services, Banking, Insurance, Brokerage, Transportation, Advertising, Wholesaling and Retailing expenses, must be added to the cost of necessities and conveniences? To this burden must be added the cost of supporting all unemployed, all people who live on income from investments, as well as the cost of Government. Government expense is undoubtedly many times too high, but the burden of extra Government expense is very small compared to other unnecessary expenses. Then, too, must be added to this burden the production of more or less unnecessary products, such as useless drugs, etc., the cost of supporting people who live on gambling or crime, maintenance of police, prisons, hospitals, armaments -- all must be supported by productive labor and the cost