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RECONSTRUCTION OR READJUSTMENT?

By

Bernard Rose.

In an address recently delivered before the members of the Ottawa Canadian Club, the Honourable A. K. McLean, Chairman of the Reconstruction Committee of the Cabinet, did not regard the term "reconstruction" as the appropriate one in connection with after war conditions. He expressed the opinion that the word "readjustment" was to be preferred, since it was not so much the rebuilding which is synonymous with reconstruction, as the readjusting of conditions and industrial dislocation due to the war, that was the problem with which all loyal Canadians must grapple.

Words and terms have their uses. Their proper understanding and definition does away with the confusion that inevitably results where the language used or terms applied are not simple and clear.

From the remarks which he addressed to his hearers, it was quite evident that Mr. McLean had been giving the matter a good deal of thought. It is fortunate for his colleagues and collaborators that he is temperamentally qualified to

deal with questions of the importance that come up for discussion, in a dispassionate and constructive manner.

The term reconstruction is, in so far as it applies to Canada, somewhat too radical. Fortunately, we at no time, during the whole period of the war, were favoured with visits from German squadrons, zeppelins, or aeroplanes. Our industrial energy was directed into war channels. This naturally, brought about certain changes and a distribution of labour and employment that would not have otherwise occurred. The production of war material and equipment necessitated the employment of large numbers of men and women who were paid high wages and who were employed during not only the regular work day, but considerably beyond that, in speeding up the production of all that was required for the carrying on of the war.

I think it should be pointed out and repeated that the production of war material was essentially and wholly for destructive purposes. In other words, there was no real benefit derived in the popular sense of the term from the labour of those engaged in the manufacturing of war material.

In peace times the working population is wholly employed in production for consumption. We may distinguish this kind of production from that of the war period by calling it profitable and

the other unprofitable.

What confronts us in Canada, is not the rebuilding of devastated territory or houses or destroyed factories and plants, but the providing of opportunities whereby

those who are now displaced may find employment and reinstate, so to speak, the era of manufacture and distribution for national needs.

We must expect that capital will

IN A HOSPITAL

Sister, Sister! Can't you hear the humming,
Swelling ever louder in the clear and moonlit sky?
Aye, I know it well, the sound that tells the Boche is coming;
Get you to the shelter now, while yet there's time to fly.
Curse them for a dirty crew, they know the game they're
playing,
Making war on mangled flesh that can but lie and moan.
Still you cannot help us here, so what's the use of staying?
Get to shelter, Sister, I can stick it on my own.

Sister, Sister, hark! the bombs are falling,
Nearer ever nearer comes the tides of wounds and death;
Spatter of machine guns to swell a din appalling,
Acrid fumes that reek of hell and grip the strangling
breath!

I can do without my drink and count myself in clover;
I can carry on a treat if only you will go,
Only for a little while until the strafe is over—
Get to shelter, Sister, dear, this ain't a woman's show.

Sister, Sister! Ah! the dark stain is growing,
There beside the cross of love and mercy on your breast;
Proudly to the cruel foe the badge of courage showing—
What have we to give you, who gave us of your best?
God, Who chasteneth His own by pain and tribulation,
Make my body whole and sound against the coming day.
Vengeance, Lord, is Thine, but hear Thy servant's
supplication—
Make of me thine instrument whene'er Thou shalt repay!

We would respectfully ask that, in making purchases, you
"patronize those who patronize us."