

The Returned Soldier Problem

Mr. President and Gentlemen.

The subject which I have chosen to bring to your attention is one worthy of the greatest consideration, and is receiving the attention of statesmen in the various countries engaged in this great war.

We must take time by the forelock in constructing measures which will satisfactorily meet the needs of the situation when demobilization of our civilian army takes place.

Already the necessity for such measures is brought home to us in dealing with the increasing number of men returning, and it is apparent that a discussion with a view to arriving at the best methods to deal with the problem of providing satisfactory employment for these men is urgent.

The first aim of all should be, and let it be fixed indelibly in your minds, that these men, who voluntarily gave up their civilian duties at the call of the Nation, must not suffer any loss by reason of their patriotism when they again return to civil life.

The man who has taken a fighting chance in the greatest war in history, to uphold the democratic ideals which you and I enjoy, must not be placed in the position of having to take a chance to ensure his own and his family's future welfare in the industrial market of the country he has served so well.

Thousands gave up their profession, trade, etc., absence from which has meant the loss of opportunity, personal advancement and gain; thousands of students were preparing for examinations which, once passed, would admit them into that sphere of life they aspired to. Gentlemen, we owe it to these men to make such provisions that no detrimental effect will be caused to their future by their readiness to spend their energies in fighting our battles.