

Preparedness and Resources

Now you might ask: Is it not sad that so short a time after the most destructive of all wars has ended we should find it necessary to devote substantial efforts to preparedness and defence? Are we not using valuable resources for destruction instead of the betterment of living conditions for our families, neighbours and all the other people whose living standards in many instances are so unbelievably low? I agree with this. Military efforts do entail a waste of resources. But these efforts are made for a purpose - and that is to ensure that we can make even better and more effective use of our resources in the future, without a pistol-packing policeman behind our backs.

There is another important point. Among the democratic nations the North American continent enjoys an abundance of natural resources. Now if we use these resources effectively and follow a wise course of dividing them between defence and civilian uses, there is no reason why we cannot be both strong in military matters and well-off in our everyday life. This is in fact the target which the Governments of the United States and Canada have set themselves - and many of our allies are striving to achieve the same goal.

Whether in peace or in war, or in a twilight period like the present, natural resources constitute a nation's life blood. Their existence within a country's boundaries entails both privileges and responsibilities. Let me sketch briefly for you the Canadian situation.

Canadian Resources and Industrial Growth

The high standard of living which Canadians enjoy and which is close to that of the United States, the country with the highest standard of living in the world, has been the result of two major factors: an abundance of natural resources and an energetic people who have made effective use of these resources.

As a result Canadians now rank among the world's greatest developers of natural resources. And this has led to making Canada the world's leading producer and exporter of many ores, minerals, wood and wood products and agricultural commodities. Canada ranks first in world output of newsprint, nickel, asbestos and platinum, second in world output of hydro-electric power, pulp, gold and zinc, and third in the production of sawn lumber, wheat, oats and silver.

Canadians have not only developed their resources at home and exchanged surpluses for other raw materials and manufactured products abroad, but they have also been processing more of their natural resources in their own country and using more of the materials to manufacture goods domestically. As a result Canada has experienced a particularly rapid rate of industrialization in the life of the present generation. Since the end of World War I Canada's population has increased by about three-quarters, the volume of manufacturing production has tripled and the output of electric power - an essential factor in industrialization - has increased nearly eight times. One out of every four persons working in Canada is now employed in manufacturing. This is the same proportion as prevails in the United States, the world's most industrialized nation.