

## PEOPLE OF CANADA MUST ASSIST IN THE GREAT WORK OF REPATRIATION

Hon. J. A. Calder in Canadian Club Address Says Term "Reconstruction" Has a Real Meaning to Canadians—Describes Work Done by Departments

### "BIG TASK IS AHEAD" DECLARES MINISTER

A comprehensive survey of the situation created by demobilization and of what the Government is doing in the way of fitting the returned soldier back into civil life was given by Hon. J. A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization and Chairman of the Repatriation and Employment Committee, at a dinner under the auspices of the Westmount (Quebec) Canadian Club, on Wednesday, February 6.

The Minister of Immigration and Colonization made an important statement to the effect that it is the intention of the Government to purchase land for the settlement of soldiers, since there is a shortage of Crown and other lands in the districts where the settlements are needed. Mr. Calder also strongly emphasized the fact that the problem of a satisfactory repatriation can only be solved by the ready cooperation of the people in this great task, and he uttered a solemn warning that if the whole country did not bend its energies to that end, disaster would ensue within the course of a few months.

Hon. Mr. Calder said these were pretty stern times in which we lived. He spoke of the signing of the armistice and the sigh of relief that it evoked. "But when that armistice was signed a new set of conditions sprang up in every belligerent country in the world; here in Canada and elsewhere a whole series of new problems was given birth, problems relating mainly to the work of demobilizing the troops and bringing them home, also to the necessary reconstruction work that must be carried out."

The Minister referred with pride to what Canada had done on the field and at home during the past four and a half years. The will to conquer had been there all the time. Now that it was all over, there were two words heard on everybody's lips—reconstruction and repatriation. The former had a somewhat different meaning here from what it had in Belgium, France, and other countries which had suffered devastation. The term implied a breakdown and demolition and then rebuilding. "However, the term 'reconstruction' has a real meaning, or should have, to the Canadian people, as it embraces the whole question of our domestic policy. It means a reviewing of the whole line of our legislation in Canada; it means a national stocktaking; it means a consideration of the question as to whether or not we have in this country placed upon our statute books those measures which are necessary in the interests of the masses of the people. It is a big job which will take a long time. People who talk glibly about 'reconstruction' imagine something is going to happen overnight. I say it is not going to do so. Our problem of reconstruction will take time; it will not be accomplished in a day, in a month, or even in two or three years; but we must start at it and make progress. We must make progress; don't make any mistake about that."

#### NEW CANADA IS BEGUN.

"Those who have an idea that the reconstruction problem is simply a re-

arrangement of the affairs of the country so that we will get back to our normal conditions are very much mistaken," declared the minister. "Canada will never be the same Canada again; the old Canada has passed away; we are to have a new Canada. There is a new spirit abroad in this land among the people. Our people are thinking differently to-day; they are thinking as they never thought before, and that is a very healthy and hopeful sign."

Hon. Mr. Calder spoke of the half million men who had gone overseas, or at least been taken from normal occupations to become citizen soldiers, of how for over four years the majority of them had had no care as to food, clothes and shelter, and being under discipline had practically no wills of their own. As most of these men were in the "twenties," this experience came at the time when habits were formed. "Now the time has come for them to come home, and they are coming by the thousands, and the problem that we have to consider is the placing of those men back into the civil life of this country. Let me say this: In my opinion the job that confronts us now is the biggest job that Canada ever had to undertake, the most difficult, the most complicated in every way, and if we fail in it—well, goodness knows what may happen."

"The problem should be considered from two angles, the angle of the individual himself—that is, what we owe to the individual boy that we took out of his place; that I need not dwell upon. Then again we must consider it from the purely national standpoint. That is, unless we can as a nation take those five hundred thousand young men and place them back properly into the civil life of this country, the nation is going to suffer and that tremendously."

"What is the attitude of the men? They are looking for something a little better than they were accustomed to before the war, and that is not to be wondered at. The great majority of these men have a broader view of life than they had when they left Canada. Their horizon has been widened, and you must not blame them if when they come back they are just a little ambitious."

#### ACTION BY GOVERNMENT.

"Well now, the question nearly everybody is asking these days—and it is one which they have a right to ask—is as to whether or not the Government is properly prepared to deal with this problem. People want to know if the Government has any plan or preparations, or whether the Government has been asleep and is merely drifting. I think there is an impression abroad to some extent that that about represents the situation, that we have not given due thought, and consideration and the necessary time to the study of this problem."

"That is not true. As a matter of fact the Government has given a great deal of study and thought to the various problems which are bound to arise as soon as the war was over. We were prepared to a large extent to meet the situation."

Describing what steps had been taken by the Government, Hon. Mr. Calder first told of the plans for demobilization that had been prepared by the military authorities many months back, but the varying circumstances from month to month and day to day had often compelled modification or entire upset of these plans. Now everything was moving very nicely, and as illustration of this the Minister said Major-General Mewburn had told him that five hundred men just come off a troopship on arrival in Ontario, passed through the depot within half an hour, in the course of which all kit was handed in all formalities fulfilled, so that the men were civilians at the end of that time. He

also spoke of the good work that had been accomplished by the Department of Civil Re-establishment under Sir James Loughheed, which had especially handled the disabled soldier, something like twelve million dollars having been spent on this work, and two thousand men had passed through institutions provided for them, while about 3,500 men were still in such institutions for medical treatment, and nearly 7,000 were taking vocational training. "So when people say the Government has not been giving attention to these problems and that we have not made provision for repatriation—well, they scarcely know what the facts are."

#### THE LAND SETTLEMENT.

The work performed by the Soldiers' Aid Commissions of the various provinces was also touched upon, after which the Minister came to the question of Land Settlement. "We have already placed something like 800 soldiers on the land," he said, "and in addition we have made loans aggregating to about \$1,400,000, though this has been done under an Act that has its limitations. Within the past few months further consideration has been given to the question of land settlement for the soldier, and it has been decided that the scheme shall be broadened. We have not sufficient Crown lands, provincial or federal, to reasonably provide for the situation, and as a consequence a decision has been reached recently to the effect that the federal authorities will purchase land situated within easy distances of the settlement centres, in order that our soldiers can get that class of land. That is a very important decision, and one that will in a very large measure meet that most difficult problem. Personally I have no doubt as to what the results will be. We will succeed in placing upon the land of this country thousands upon thousands of young men who will eventually become good settlers. Don't make any mistake; we are going to have some losses; there are going to be some failures, but in the main by the placing of these men within the existing settlements in this country the net result eventually will be very beneficial not only to the men themselves, but to Canada as a whole."

Hon. Mr. Calder told of the consolidating of the five Government departments that had been dealing with the repatriation of the soldier and of the success that had been attained by bringing together all organizations interested in the work throughout the Dominion, thus co-ordinating all effort of that sort. In order to successfully carry out the work, he declared one thing was necessary. "We must have you and all the rest of the people back of us. This, after all, is not a Government job, no Government or organization can handle this task. This is a national task; it is the people's job. Unless the people from ocean to ocean think and act rightly on this question, Canada is going to fail and every person in this country will feel the effect of it. Our people should not ask: 'What is the Government doing?' They should ask: 'What am I doing to solve this question, and what is my share in the work?' Unless we can get people to think that way and realize that they have a share in this work, we are going to fail. But we are not going to fail, because I am convinced that our people do think right, and that they are prepared to take up their burden in this great national undertaking that faces us."

#### EMPLOYMENT QUESTION.

Making some suggestions as to how people could help, the Minister put first welcoming the boys home and making the soldier feel right the moment he gets back; also looking after their families, and especially where a bride was brought over from the Old Country. Another way was in regard to giving employment. "There is a tendency on the part of people everywhere to go slow, to shut down. People are inclined to be pessimistic and to wait because wages are high and the cost of material high. Something is going to happen if this opinion continues to prevail; that is, unless our people have more courage and more optimism, unless they are pre-

pared to meet this situation and provide employment, something may take place that many of us won't like a few months from now. Many employers are tightening and letting men go. Nothing could be more dangerous. Many people made money during the war and tucked it away in Victory Bonds. Unless some one is ready to loosen a little of that money in order to tide over the situation—well, just think about it. There is an old adage about being 'penny wise and pound foolish' that may apply to Canada unless we are very careful."

"Has the Government done anything, or does it propose to do, in the direction of providing employment? First, in so far as public works are concerned we propose a programme that will to a large extent meet the situation as far as that class of work is concerned. There are limitations to that, but we will go as far as we think reasonably possible. In connection with shipbuilding, our yards are all full at the present time, and we hope to see this continue. As far as our railways are concerned, during the past four years much work has been left undone that ought to have been done, and from the point of view of maintenance I suppose our railways were never in worse condition than to-day, so that a vast amount of work can be done in that direction. As you know, we have a housing programme, which I think will be acceptable by the provinces, and from fifteen to twenty million dollars' worth of houses will be constructed in the comparatively near future. Then, again, in connection with the land settlement scheme, there will be construction and the making of implements, and with the adoption of our new plan we hope to have that in full swing in the course of the next few months. In other words, as regards what the Government can do, we propose to do everything that should be done in order to help out this situation. That, however, will not meet the whole problems unless our people see that they have a share in it, individuals, manufacturers, corporations, and I would urge that everybody should rally to the solution of this great problem."

### FRENCH CANADIAN W.S.S. CAMPAIGN IN MANITOBA

In the French-speaking districts of Manitoba the War Savings campaign is being organized under the direction of a separate branch of the Manitoba division. The Committee will be known as "La Commission Nationale des Economies de Guerre, Section du Manitoba, St. Boniface." The following have been invited to become members of the "Comité Honoraire":—

Sa Grandeur l'Archevêque de St. Boniface, Hon. J. E. P. Prendergast, Hon. L. A. Prudhomme, Monseigneur Béliveau, J. L. Bourgoin, A. H. J. Dubuc, Echev. J. A. Marion, J. E. Cyr, Jos. Bernier, A. H. de Trémaudan, Hector Héroux, Ernest Guertin, Calixte Landry, Mariapolis; Paul Chénard, St. Pierre; Edmond Comeault, Letellier.

### B.C. SALMON PACK TOTAL FOR SEASON

The total British Columbia salmon pack for 1918 amounted to 1,616,157 cases, an increase of 58,672 cases over the pack of 1917. Percentage of higher grades of salmon was only 21 per cent of total, being much less than a year ago, on account of the failure of sockeye salmon run in Fraser.—Commissioner of Immigration and Colonization, Winnipeg.

#### Maple Sugar Prices.

Prices last year for maple sugar and maple syrup were the highest ever known. Good sugar sold at 25 cents a pound; syrup from \$2.25 to as high as \$3 a gallon. There has not been much sign of decline this year so far. In 1911 the price of maple sugar ranged from 5 to 10 cents a pound only, to the farmer.—Canada Food Board.

Thrift Stamps make thrifty children.