

It is not much to ask the government to vote millions of dollars to keep men employed. It is a thousand times better to keep them employed than to vote millions of dollars to destroy them.

Therefore I say to the minister, in conclusion, take a big bold stand for the provision of opportunities for men to work. Industry cannot absorb them all; it will help; then the government must provide works, and there is ample opportunity in Canada for works. If the United States can spend \$550,000,000 on building power plants, we in Canada can do something. Last summer I saw a great power opportunity on the Slave river, and another one on the Peace river; the two combined would produce over a million horse-power, and if we could provide the horse-power we might invite industry to make use of it.

The Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Mackenzie) will undoubtedly have in view, for the settlement of some returned soldiers on the land, the country north of the Peace river, but we must not do what was done in the past, some thirty or forty years ago. We must not send men into parts of the country seventy miles away from any railway. As some pioneers north of Peace River told me, for thirty-five or forty years they looked in vain for railway transportation which they never got, and they were obliged to cart their grain by truck or horses. At one place, Notikewin, they were seventy miles away from any railway. There is ample opportunity to give thousands of men jobs which will provide abundant employment.

I suggest that the minister set up a committee. I shall be glad to serve on any research committee free of charge in connection with the job of providing jobs. The munitions plants should be kept going if at all possible. Surely there must be thousands of things that can be made in them and that should be made after the war. I suggest, therefore, that some research board or committee be put into operation to look for opportunities to keep these plants going, which ordinarily will cease production at the end of the war and consequently throw men on the streets. We must do something to keep these plants in operation so as to provide employment for men in the making of things which people will buy if only they have money. There is nothing like putting money into men's pockets. They will circulate it.

I am wondering what about the men returning now. When I go home on Saturdays I am besieged by returned men asking for employment. I cannot give it to them, and in that regard I would say to the minister that he should keep the men in khaki for a reasonable

length of time after demobilization, or at any rate after their retirement from service, so that they will have some income to look forward to in the interim before being regularly established.

Mr. D. G. ROSS (St. Paul's): I have a few words to say in connection with this bill. We all know what national problems present themselves after every war. That is a matter of history. We must see to it that we shall not have a repetition after this war, of the condition that prevailed after the last war, the condition that has prevailed after other wars. Employers should be enabled to take back men after the war. That is a good idea and it is one that should be in the bill. It is admirable on the part of a great many employers to-day that they have made it a condition that men who have enlisted in the army shall be reinstated after they come back.

After the last war we had a depression resulting in unemployment, with men walking the streets. There was despondency among the people, who were wondering whether, after all, the fighting that had taken place had been worth while when men came back to the condition they found existing then. The government looked after men by way of pensions and so on, to the extent of a certain amount of money. We had not had a great deal of experience in those days, but we have experience now, and that experience must be put into practice after this war.

The bill is certainly a step in the right direction. We want to have a bill which will not be a deterrent to the enlistment of men in the army but one that will tend towards increasing the enlistment of men. The men returning to-day are to a great extent being absorbed in industry. Employers have done a good deal in the way of taking men back wherever possible, and where men have come back with disabilities they have been absorbed to a large extent. But it is in the time that will follow the cessation of the war that we shall have the tremendous problem on our hands. It is all very well to have a bill which has a compulsory feature such as this; but no matter how much you compel, you cannot compel people to do something they simply cannot do, and if it is impossible for employers to reemploy these men it cannot be done and no amount of compulsion through a bill such as this will be any good unless we have planning.

I want to give a warning to the government and to the house. When this war is over we must demobilize men slowly, both our armed forces and also the workers in industry. We shall have to continue making munitions long after we have need for them; we shall