

REFERENCE PAPERS

WARTIME INFORMATION BOARD, OTTAWA

No. 11

July 26, 1943.

SOCIAL INSURANCE AND THE WAR

Four years of war have traced an indelible mark on the lives of Canadian men and women, and have brought into focus the changing pattern of their social needs. The growing strength of Canada in the family of nations and the interchange of experience resulting from that association, the nature of the struggle against the Axis powers, and the expansion of her industrial economy to the point where she stands as fourth among the United Nations in the production of war materials and supplies, have given a profound impetus to the social consciousness within Canada, which, in its turn, is clearly manifest in the new emphasis upon social planning and personal security for all.

The tremendous increase in Canada's productive output has been accompanied by the elimination of mass unemployment as a social factor. Such unemployment as still exists is confined almost exclusively within the category of special problems, including the period of transference between jobs, production stoppages in industrial units, and certain other types of interruption of working time of a similar nature. With the exception of those who, through physical or mental infirmity, are unable to perform useful labor, the great majority of those without employment at any one moment may look forward to the definite prospect of further employment.

Despite the increased burden of taxation placed upon the wage-earner for the financing of the national war effort, consumer incomes and purchasing power have been increased among several sections of the population, and the gross earnings of many family groups are now substantially higher than their pre-war levels. This condition has been attained through more

The War and
Social Con-
sciousness

Elimina-
tion of
Mass Unem-
ployment