

riding who had never had any employee status in their lifetime rushed to join the colours. They had been out of work for years before the war and were trudging round the streets looking for work. When war broke out, thousands of these young men rushed to enlist. I do not for a moment suggest that they enlisted because they were out of work. I say that they are patriotic, and I cannot find anything in the bill which would cover many of these young men who enlisted in the first, the second and perhaps the third divisions and who were not employed either before or after September 9, 1939. I know that the minister would be the last man in this house to bar them from employment. It may be an oversight that the bill does not cover them, and I hope that when it is in committee provision will be made for the thousands of young men who rushed to the colours when war broke out but did not have employee status. It would be manifestly most unfair if they were debarred from employment under this bill, and I hope that the minister will take that into consideration when the bill is in committee.

The British bill has something to say about enforcement. The returning men who did have employee status may be turned down when they go back to the plants where they worked to seek employment, and somebody should be ready to assist them in getting reinstated. There may be something in this bill to that effect. Perhaps I am not sufficiently qualified to understand its legal terms, but I do know that the British bill specifically provides for that contingency. The British bill, chapter 81, George VI, by section 14, subsection 4—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): What is the date of that bill?

Mr. MacNICOL: It is the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, and is contained in Public General Acts and Measures, 2 and 3 and part of 3 and 4, George VI, 1938-39, Volume 11.

Mr. MACDONALD (Brantford City): That was before the war.

Mr. MacNICOL: No. The bill is entitled the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, and subsection 4 of section 14 reads:

(4) If the minister is satisfied that it is necessary to restrain employers from terminating the employment of their employees by reason of any duties or liabilities which they are or may become liable to perform or discharge by reason of their having been called from their civil employment for service connected with the present emergency, or to make provision for the prevention of evasion of the provisions of this section, he may make regulations for those purposes. . . .

There may be something in the present bill providing for the enforcement of its provisions. I trust that is so, because from my long association with working men—and I know the minister, too, has had a long association with working men—I know and he knows that working men would be diffident about enforcing their rights to return to work. If a working man went to get the help of a lawyer, he might be scared as soon as he got inside the door of his office and saw the desks, easy chairs and all the rest of the paraphernalia of a lawyer's office, and might at once back out again. So I hope the bill will contain some provision that will make it somebody's business to receive representations from the soldiers and to see that they get fair play in the matter of reinstatement.

Having had a lot to do with unemployment following the last war, I look forward with a very great deal of interest to what is going to take place after this war. As I said at the commencement of my remarks, I am hopeful, from the plans which the government is making, that the same conditions will not prevail after this war as after 1918, when soldiers returning to their home town were compelled to walk the streets for months and months looking for work, and often were turned away from the plants where some of them had worked before. I am most anxious, so far as I can assist, to see that the returned soldiers become reestablished.

The fundamentals in dealing with labour are clear and simple. I always think of what Mr. Herbert Hoover said in 1919, when he was chairman of the reconstruction committee in the United States, and later president of the republic. I have not his exact words, but they impressed themselves on me in my days of closer association with labour than I perhaps have now, and I remembered them as long as I had anything to do with actual labour. He said (1) that any man desiring to work should have the opportunity to work; (2) that his working conditions should be reasonable; (3) that his health should be protected while he was employed; (4) that he should have adequate wages or return for his labour to enable him to keep his family in reasonable comfort and provide for their education. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that nine out of ten members of this house have come from humble working-men's homes. I did, and I am proud of it. The minister did, and he is proud of it. So the education of the working-man's child is all-important.

Mr. Hoover's fifth point was that he should be able to pay for his home. I hope that after this war there will be no such conditions as