

be kept at the jobs they were doing, at the same wages. If, instead of adopting that attitude, the Government had told the workers frankly and repeatedly over a period of time that conversion would involve the transferment of industrial workers from one type of industry to another, and serious readjustments, in order to provide jobs for all, and that farmers, who by thousands had answered the call for help to make munitions, would have to return at the cessation of hostilities to their neglected and unworked farms in order to perform the equally patriotic and essential task of providing urgently-needed food; if women had been told that the need of work was to be the yardstick of employment, and that if they had good homes, and husbands earning enough to support them, they should not hold a job which to another person meant bread, I believe a different attitude of mind would have been developed among the workers. But now, having been led to believe certain things, the workers are naturally looking to the Government to fulfil its promise; and the fulfilment of that promise is not going to be as easy as the Minister of Labour has led them to believe. However, serious as this difficulty may be for a short time, it is unlikely that it will constitute a major problem. That will come later, and it is upon the prospects and plans for permanent employment that I should like to speak to you for a few minutes to-day.

The majority of thinking people in Canada realize that the war emergency, with its natural accompaniment of full employment, could be followed a few years hence by an emergency of a different type but none the less serious—the type of emergency which we experienced to some extent two or three years after the close of the last war, and to a much greater extent in the 1930's. It is because of this grim experience of the past that today all governmental bodies, as well as leaders in the industrial and business world and in the community life in general, are striving as never before to blueprint the future.

As one who lives in a city small in population, but great in the proportionate contributions which it makes to the industrial life of the nation, I have been extremely interested in trying to find out from some of our industrial experts how the future appears to them. In our town, with a population of only 33,000, we have a greatly diversified industrial field, which includes the Canadian General Electric Company, the Quaker Oats of Canada, the Western Clock Company, Raybestos, Dominion Woollens, DeLaval, Nashua Paper and many others. All these

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plants have, of course, been running at peak capacity during the war. Now the people of the town and surrounding district are expecting these industries to continue to employ the same number of workers in the years to come as they have been employing through the war years. Indeed, the people expect even more than that; they expect that in addition these plants will absorb a substantial percentage of the men and women from the town and district who have been in uniform and are now returning to civilian life. Well, the opinion of the few industrial leaders with whom I have discussed this matter is simply that it cannot be done. And what is true of one town with such diversified industrial activity will probably be true of other cities great and small across the Dominion.

Please remember that I am speaking now of permanent employment, not of the boom period which we expect to come soon and to last until we catch up with the back-log of scarcity and demand. I stress this point, that industry will not be able to provide indefinitely the high scale of employment that is expected of it. I stress that point because in almost all the plans I have seen or heard of, and in all the statements that I have read concerning the question of employment, the central theme is that industry must do this, that or the other thing to take up the slack and prevent unemployment. And when people speak of industry in that way they do not include in their thinking such activities as mining, forestry or reconstruction, but only manufacturing.

If we study statistics provided by the Canada Year Book and other reliable sources we realize that more is being expected of our industrial plants than they will be able to perform. The latest total estimate which I have seen of employable persons at present available is 4,700,000. At the peak of peacetime employment before the crash of 1929 there were employed in manufacturing plants 667,000 workers. If to this figure we add 5 per cent for expansion, plus 100,000 to allow for increased export trade and optimism, we still have a total of only 800,000 workers, or something less than 17 per cent of the total number of employable persons as the estimated maximum that could be absorbed in manufacturing plants. I am told by the Department of Labour that at the end of 1943 there were 1,241,068 persons employed in industrial plants. Even if we concede that the number of women and other war workers, such as construction workers and farmers, who leave these plants voluntarily will equal the number of ex-service men and women return-