

A Most Important Feature

In the government's labor mobilization program, women occupy an important place. In his speech detailing the program, Premier King said that the most "important single feature of the program" was the use that is to be made of the Dominion's womanpower for war production. A recent survey of the potential labor supply in Canada showed that women constitute the most available reserve of manpower. Under the present plan women are to be enlisted to replace men in every sort of occupation in order to free younger men for direct war services.

The women who now constitute the labor reserve are most of them housewives and a considerable proportion among them have young children. For domestic and other reasons they have not sought employment and to secure their services to the fullest extent a social program was needed. This the government has now formulated. Premier King announced the following measures are to be undertaken by the government to bring women into the needed work:

1. Recruiting campaigns to attract women into the essential jobs.
2. Provision of facilities for interviewing women applicants and giving them advice and direction.
3. Establishment of competent job information and placement services, specializing in female labor.
4. Advances, where necessary, to meet transportation costs in getting women workers to places where work is available.
5. Provision of hostels or other satisfactory housing arrangements for women workers.
6. Provision of nurseries and other means of caring for children.
7. Provision, where needed, of medical and recreational facilities.
8. Provision of training programs, specially designed for women.
9. Pressure upon employers who may be reluctant to engage female labor.
10. Changes in civil service and institutional restrictions on the employment of female, and particularly married female, labor.

This is an admirably comprehensive program. When put into operation under competent direction, it should undoubtedly help to spur the war production program and achieve other benefits besides. From the standpoint of Canadian unity and social development this is indeed an historic program. It will blaze new trails in the social service field and in government relationships. It places the federal government in the position of giving leadership in matters that concern human welfare, particularly in the protection of women and children.

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