

More Jobs Than Men

Coupled with comment that governmental and industrial studies are being made for the purpose of minimizing winter unemployment, a current survey notes that as this year comes to an end there is a labor shortage in Canada. The survey is one of the periodic reports issued by the Canadian Association of Purchasing Agents. The significant comment on the inadequate labor supply reads:

One or two trouble spots seem to be appearing in our nation's economy, these being the shortage of labor and of some raw materials. Employment has increased steadily for the past six months and, as production rises, shortages will be aggravated. . . . Even severe climatic conditions are being overcome as the present trend of the construction season is lengthening.

As the report also notes that inventories are not increasing, recent heavy purchasing means that both supply and demand are growing. Steel and cement are not alone in their short supply position. Their shortage is merely more acute. The fears of one year ago that a slump would develop led to undue pessimism about unemployment. But even then the facts did not obscure the chronic labor shortage in Canada, except to the politicians.

Our dairy industry is searching for more technical personnel. Urban industry is scouting everywhere for engineers and skilled technicians. With every new engineer and technician employed, new jobs are created for additional workers in the production of raw materials, transportation, processing, and all the way up the line to retailing.

These conditions in the midst of winter thus become a criticism of our immigration policy. They also point up the need for more technical colleges. But in that connection it must be borne in mind that the more young men and women who qualify for positions of senior responsibility in industry, the more workers must be found to provide the basic materials and to follow them through the assembly lines.

A Canadian Government which assumes to be keeping an eye on economic development is in fact neglecting economic needs unless its immigration policy is liberal in concept and active in the placement of men in communities where they are needed. The proposition that a nation of only fifteen million people, with a gross national product rising by from 4 per cent to a current 9 per cent, per year, can maintain its rate of growth without more new citizens entering the country, cannot be supported. We still are seeking more capital to finance more expansion, but forgetting that for every additional \$1,000 added to employed capital there must be an appropriate addition to the number of employed workers.

Natural increase is a desirable source of new manpower. But it never yet has put enough men in our mines, factories and transportation services. And nothing but a more active immigration policy will do so for years to come.