BY D. A. MACDONALD

Assistant Dominion Forester

I think it has already been well established—as Mr. Bedard has pointed out—that the forest can provide an ideal locale for both the mental and physical rehabilitation of the returned men. I believe that any post-war reconstruction program must take in more than one class of worker, it must provide for three classes, as follows:

- (1) Returned soldiers;
- (2) Present workers in war industries;
- (3) Youths between the ages of 18 and 25 must be provided with apprenticeship training for later absorption in useful occupations.

The forests of Canada provide a splendid background for such a program. I do not think there is any doubt in the minds of those gathered here today that the various forest services of Canada could use labour to good advantage in the development of their respective territory. I am not going to reiterate the kind or the class of work that needs to be done. You know that yourselves. If you don't, then I would refer you to the resolution which your Section has probably submitted concerning such work or to the November, 1941, issue of *Forest and Outdoors*, where the kind and nature of forestry projects are outlined.

It will be some time perhaps before we will be called upon to provide the actual work for the rehabilitation of the armed services and, of course, it is to be expected that not all these men will want to take advantage of such a program. So far this proposed work of post-war rehabilitation has only reached the stage where committees are being set up, but are not as yet functioning. It will not be long, however, before these committees are convening. In the meantime, let us get our plans ready; let each and every province draw plans for work, and let it be useful work.

As I see it, this is the point to be emphasized at this stage. We must get busy on these plans now. It won't be sufficient for an organization to say, "Give me 5,000 men and I can put them to work for five years." Such statements are not worth a hoot. There is another point I wish to emphasize, namely, that it is not the rehabilitation of the forest alone which we must consider. Our forest resources are in need of rehabilitation, and forest conservation is a very essential feature, but we must not lose sight of the fact that our man power must be rehabilitated, and that, after all, is the main object to be considered.

In speaking of the need for planning in advance, I think I can appreciate the need for such, from experience. In the past nine years the Dominion Forest Service has been called on—always with exceedingly short notice—to provide work for various kinds of auxiliary labour to be used on forest projects. First there was the Unemployment Relief which functioned for a few years, followed by an appeal from the Youth Employment Committee to provide a work plan for unemployed youths. Then followed the N.F.P. as a result of the work done with the Youth Employment Committee. This, you will recall, resulted in a hurried appeal for programs of work from the different forest services.

The N.F.P. had all the "ear-marks" of a really useful program, but unfortunately its initiation in 1939 practically coincided with the outbreak of war. Had time permitted us to continue gathering experience and preparing plans for its continuity, in the course of three years, we would undoubtedly have had an organization which would have produced valuable results not only for the forest, but for society itself.

Since that time this Service has been called on to organize projects in connection with Internment operations at our various forest experiment stations, and only this last year a new form of auxiliary labour appeared in the form of A.S.W.¹ (conscientious objectors) camps on our National Parks and Forest Experiment Stations. I would like to point out that the experience we have had in organizing such work has left no doubt in my mind of the need for planning forestry projects in advance. Moreover, the sum total of all these various forms of auxiliary help have done much to improve our forests, but a well-timed program of the extent to be expected in a post-war rehabilitation scheme will be much larger, and if plans are formulated in advance, and co-ordinated, it is reasonable to expect far-reaching benefits for our forests.

If there is to be such a program and the rehabilitation of the men as well as the forest is to be considered, then there must be a training program, especially if it is hoped to have these men absorbed by industry. One of the big problems in connection with training will be the need for trained staffs to look after such projects. In addition to foresters, trained personnel for supervision will be essential. Great care will be necessary in the selection of supervisory staff. These must be chosen keeping in mind the necessity for patience, tact and judgment, as well as ability. These are items which we must think about and think about now. When plans have been drawn, revised and re-revised again and again, and boiled down to something which can be put into actual practice with guaranteed useful results, then, and not until then, will we be in a position to approach the committees who will be responsible for drafting this great scheme.

There is one other important factor in connection with the preparation of plans. To be of any practical value such forestry plans must be based on the regional development of our natural resources, and they must be integrated with those for agriculture, mining, fishing and the tourist industry. As an example of where such co-ordination can be applied, I might mention the case of a watershed. Take for instance the St. Maurice watershed. Here we have a forested area which can boast of forest soil. For many generations now it has supported growing and thriving industries. Here we have an example of a watershed needing protection for the great power development on the St. Maurice river and tributaries—forests needing protection and management for the benefit of the tremendous pulp and paper industries in that region. There is the fish, fur, and game to be considered also, and the development of the tourist industry. Then, of course, there is agriculture and perhaps to some extent mining. Any forestry plans, where possible, should be co-ordinated with development of these other natural resources in this region. We have got to think not only of the forestry aspect, but all the others mentioned. All must be knit into one sound, economic structure, but most important of all, we have got to consider right now the part we can play in the post-war rehabilitation to come, and get ready for it.

1. A.S.W.—Alternative Service Workers.