



Stocking shell blanks. The resettlement of war workers proceeds side by side with the resettlement of the soldiers



This girl is inspecting Mills hand grenades. In this factory 30,000 of these hand grenades were made by women every week

Reconstruction in Europe—III

The British Plan

By C. H. Claudy, Foreign Correspondent of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN in London

THERE has been much publication in the United States of stories bringing forth the wonders of the forehandedness of the British Government in considering reconstruction problems long before the necessity for reconstruction became apparent. But such stories have usually proceeded from writers who took into consideration the British facts and looked upon them as silhouetted against an American background.

Had the United States continued in the war for a period of three years there is little doubt that we, too, would have had, if not a Ministry of Reconstruction as has the British Empire, at least a fairly large and very busy bureau of some department working on the problem, or perhaps a Board of the Council of National Defense, concerned only with, "What shall we do after the war?"

As a matter of fact, Britain, with her wholly different and much more complicated problem, while she undoubtedly gave much thought to it from the beginning, did not possess her Ministry of Reconstruction until August, 1917, but little more than a year ago. It has been a short time indeed for such an organization to function to any elaborate end. But in spite of the shortness of the time, the armistice did not catch Great Britain unprepared, and the final settlement of peace will see her with all her theories made and written down, all her plans perfected and all her governmental machinery in the full force of perfect operation—with what result the whole world will wait to see with honest anxiety and high hopes—for her solution of her problem is worthy her high ideals and her courage. Her program deserves to succeed in full measure.

If it does, some credit must certainly be given the

machinery. It is, of course, impossible to draw its details in a page—scarcely in a book. But its more important shafts, flywheels, springs and levers can be indicated.

The Ministry of Reconstruction is wholly an advisory department of the government, with no executive powers—much like our own Council of National Defense in that respect. The law creating it defines its powers as being to consider and advise upon the problems which may arise out of the present war and to institute and conduct such inquiries, prepare such schemes and make such recommendations as the Minister of Reconstruction shall think fit. In addition the Minister of Reconstruction may be given authority to act with any government authority, by order in council, of His Majesty.

So much for the simple creation of what seems destined to be one of the most vital engines in the British governmental machinery. In getting it in shape to function it has been divided into branches which deal with commerce and production, including the supply of materials, with finance, shipping and public service, with labor and industrial organization, with rural development, with the machinery of both central and local government, including health and education, and with housing and internal transport.

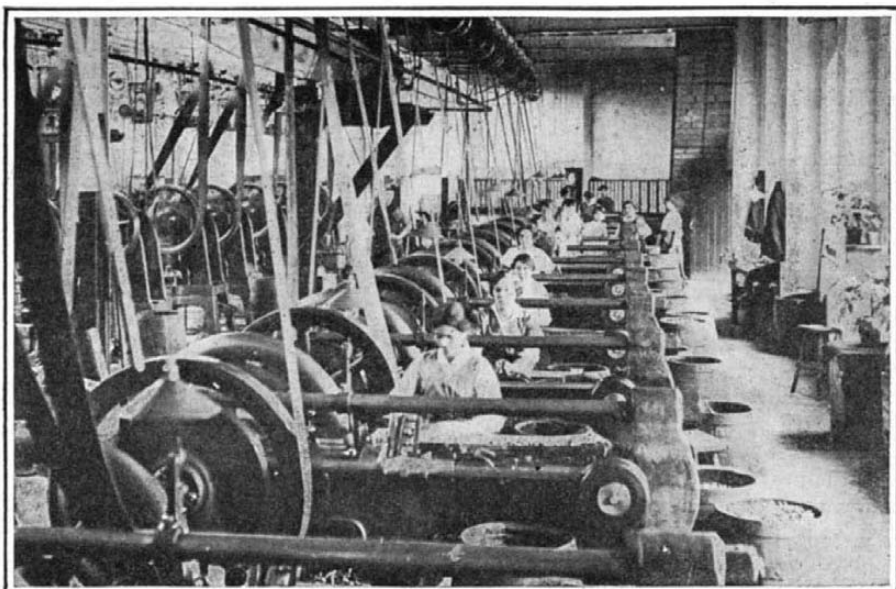
The Ministry as a whole and every branch of it is so arranged as immediately to be notified of any proposal looking to the solution of any post-war problem which may be originated in any department of the government. If any responsible person or organization anywhere in the nation has a scheme or an idea regarding any feature of reconstruction, the Ministry or some particular branch of it is where he or they go. The Ministry as a whole or

any branch of it, may initiate any scheme or idea of reconstruction and, if the Minister thinks well of it, investigate it and make a report upon it. The Ministry is, in effect, first a great clearing house of ideas—in a nation as devoted to the purpose of reconstruction in the full meaning of the word as well as to its lesser definitions of reestablishment and readjustment, this is perhaps its most important function.

Considering all reconstruction ideas, wherever originating, with relation to each other, and with special reference to the branch of government which has executive power in the particular premises, the Ministry builds its reconstruction policy, for submission to the Cabinet, and, if there approved, to Parliament for any necessary legislative action which may be required.

Obviously, this sort of a program is no more a one-man job than a government is a one man job. So the Minister has created an Advisory Council, working in sections, four in number, devoted to production and commercial organization, to finance, transport and public services, to labor and industrial organization and to social development, under which rather all-inclusive heading come such matters as agriculture, education, health, housing, etc.

It is in this council that the true democracy of the reconstruction program has its origin, for each section has representatives of all the principal interests sitting with it. Thus, in the section devoted to finance are not only financiers, but labor interests—in the section which deals with agriculture are not only agricultural interests but business interests represented so that no problem is considered merely from its main, but from all its economic angles.



Battery of indenting machines for .303 cartridge cases under the watchful eyes of their women operatives



When the seven million soldiers return to peaceful pursuits, it is proposed to have all the clothing factories running on a peace basis

The work of the council is sharply differentiated from that of the Ministry as a whole. The former deals with the specific instance only, the latter with the whole subject. The council is well into its labors on many of these specially referred topics, among which are such very diverse, but very important matters as the standardization of railway equipment, post-war rationing of industry, organization of rural information centers, etc.

It is impossible here to go into all the problems which are being considered or which have been considered by the Ministry. Some of them will have a very far reaching effect, not only upon the United Kingdom, but upon the United States. Of some of these, at least, it is hoped to treat at greater length later. For the present, however, many of these activities must be omitted from consideration here on account of lack of space: others can be but sketched.

In the branch dealing with commerce and production, for instance, the supply and control of raw materials for post-war industry is a very vital matter. So is the subject of financial facility for British commerce and industry. Many industries in England are in danger of total extinction, though vitally needed, because of failure of supplies or material or even of labor. It is a problem in which the priority organization of the government is directly interested and is considered by the Ministry of Reconstruction in connection with that department. Similarly is the matter of the establishment of new industries a matter of great moment, and here America may find herself more than an interested spectator, for the committee appointed to consider this has already made a report showing what new industries can be and what should be established and many of them, especially as regards those which may be called engineering trades in England, but which we know as manufacturing businesses in the United States, affect American export probabilities in no small degree. Volume of demand for British goods, the nature of that demand, and how best to create a larger amount is getting serious attention, and, to help fill the demand, investigations into improvements in trade organizations to a better and more economical production, distribution and marketing, are being conducted in the most practical and go-ahead way.

Great Britain is not asleep. She recognizes that there is to be a tremendous world demand for manufactured goods. The world is in many ways four years behind on normal output, and the devastated regions present a gaping hole which must be filled. It is the history of all wars that they are followed by a period of uncertainty, of readjustment, which speedily merges into feverish business and manufacturing activity. This war should be no exception, and Great Britain proposes to get her share and to help rebuild her shattered industries—industries shattered by a patriotic devotion to cause and country—by understanding not only the demand but the best way to meet it.

Another labor of the Ministry is in connection with the disposal of government stores. It sounds simple enough to say, "store them" and it is equally simple to say, "sell them," but neither answer at all fits the emergency. Great Britain was preparing, right up to the 11th of November, for a war of unstated length. So was the United



The munition worker (the girl behind the gun) has been a cornerstone of the National defense. Now she is a national problem. Reconstruction would be an empty word if the Empire forgot these loyal girls

States. But we had just begun to function and Great Britain's manufacturing machinery had been speeding up through four years. Her industries were organized entirely on a war basis—ours on a peace basis with war outcroppings! She has immense, stupendous amounts of material made and ready for service. To store it is to mulct the taxpayer of money both he and the government need for other things. To dump all these stores upon the market may be to ruin some industries and cause a labor riot of no mean proportions. For instance, there are literally thousands of motor lorries in perfectly good running order. What shall be done with them? If they are sold, what becomes of the great motor industry, now ready to resume its activities? What becomes of the men who want to reëngage in such industries, who have been perhaps, sustained through years of trench toil and bloody sacrifice by the thought of the work-bench, the job, the wages waiting for them, promised to them both by their employers and by the government for which they went forth to battle? Yet, to store all these vehicles and make the state pay is to make the individual pay—and the individual in the Empire is already paying and paying well for this war! One proposition is to absorb them gradually into agricultural transport or public service, but the question requires considerable thinking out and much planning—it is one of the practical things for which the Ministry of Reconstruction was created.

power in the hundreds of Norwegian waterfalls has been of invaluable importance.

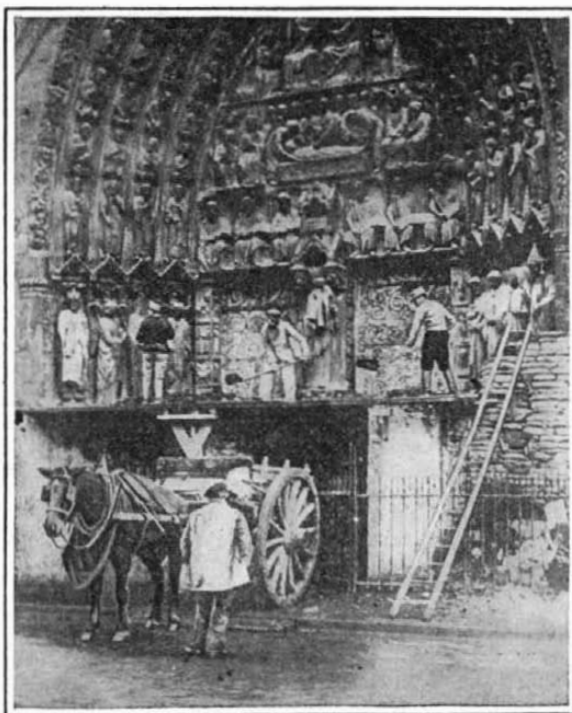
One of the main centers of this great industrial revolution is the district around "Sognefjorden," with its 100-mile water basin. None of the Norwegian fjords has such enormous water power as this one, and so, in recent years, one factory after another has been built there. The foremost of these is the enormous plant built by Norsk Aluminum Company, with the Høyang Falls as source of power. During the past two years a new Norwegian industrial city has been built there, with many factories and good and satisfactory dwellings for the employees. When peace comes this will be an interesting link in the chain of Norway's tourist attractions. When all these plants are running normally they will be Europe's largest aluminum producers.

Restoring the Art Treasures of France

It was clearly evident at the very outset of the war that the barbarian hordes which swept into France, had no true conception of the beauties of art. There could be no plea of efficiency to justify them in the wanton destruction of rare paintings and precious sculptures. Certainly such acts were not calculated to intimidate the French people but rather to exasperate them. Cathedrals seemed to be a special mark for German gunners and airplane bombers. To protect

the richly carved entrances of these edifices, the French masked them with walls of sandbags. The work of removing these protecting coverings was started soon after the signing of the armistice. One of the accompanying photographs shows the work of restoring the principal porch of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris, which for years has been hidden behind a mass of earth and sand.

Our other photograph illustrates the disinterring of one of Rodin's masterpieces at Douai. This was discovered by French soldiers while hunting for hidden mines. It was not buried by the French, but by some German officer who took a fancy to the figure and concealed it with the purpose of digging it up and sending it back home when opportunity offered. It offers another bit of evidence of the systematic despoiling and looting of art treasures by German officers.



Stripping war armor from the Cathedral of Notre Dame



Disinterring a statue buried by the Germans at Douai

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