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UNEMPLOYMENT
POLICY.

—
The Problem of
the Depressed
Areas.

(Previous
Reference:
Cabinet 8
(31), Con-
clusion 4.)

5. The Cabinet had before them a Note (C.P.-1 (31)) prepared by the Secretariat to the Panel of Ministers on Unemployment, covering Memoranda by the Minister of Health, the Minister of Labour and the President of the Board of Trade, on the problems of the depressed unemployment areas. This Note was circulated by instructions of the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet also had under consideration a Note by the President of the Board of Trade (C.P.-15 (31)) which he was circulating to the Panel of Ministers on Unemployment, in continuation of his Note (included in C.P.-1 (31)) on Industrial Development in Depressed Areas.

A general discussion took place on the subject of Unemployment Policy, which was in effect a continuation of the discussion at the Cabinet on the previous evening.

The Prime Minister reported that he had summoned a meeting of the Panel of Ministers on Unemployment to take place at noon on the following day, and that he had also arranged a meeting of the Economic Advisory Council early next month.

There was general agreement that it would be a mistake for the Government to pretend that it was possible, by means of relief works, and so forth, to make much impression on the unemployment figures at the rate at which they are mounting up in consequence of the world depression now prevailing. The present crisis was probably due to the faulty system under which the whole world was working, and no Government could be expected to bring any marked alleviation within 12 or 18 months.

General
Policy.

The Government spokesmen in Debate should make it clear that the unemployed would be kept from starvation, and that in the meanwhile the constructive work of the Government towards the permanent reduction of unemployment was continuing.

It was felt that the point on which it was necessary to concentrate was the speeding up of approved schemes.

The President of the Board of Trade informed his colleagues that a scheme had been prepared by certain individuals for the re-organisation of the whole Iron and Steel Industry on the lines indicated in the Report of the Sub-Committee of the Economic Advisory Council (C.P.-189 (30)). He hoped to receive a copy of this scheme in the near future, with permission to circulate it to the Cabinet. He warned the Cabinet that the question might arise as to obtaining powers to compel some small proportion of the industry, that might stand out, to enter this scheme.

It was suggested that one matter that deserved looking into was the effect on industry of international agreements and cartels allocating markets or regulating freight charges, and so forth.

Comment was made on the very serious effect on the unemployment figures of the present restriction of emigration to the Dominions, which, it was stated, might add 200,000 a year to the unemployed in this country.

Attention was also drawn to the large unsatisfied demand in domestic service, and the Minister of Labour stated that the numbers of persons available for this form of employment was being increased every week.

The Iron and Steel Industry.

Proposed Re-organisation.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 46 (30), Conclusion 14.)

Empire Migration.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 60 (30), Conclusion 7.)

F.R.
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Domestic Service.