

# BACK-TO-THE-LAND TO BE SUGGESTED

## Chairman of Unemployment Commission Makes An- nouncement

### FAVORS COMPULSORY LABOR

#### Conference of Provincial Pre- miers Suggest- ed

The call for a conference on the unemployment situation between the Federal Government, the Provincial Premiers and representatives of various interested bodies, organizations and municipalities was made at the opening of the afternoon's session of the Ontario Municipal Association by Sir John Willison, chairman of the Ontario Commission on Unemployment.

"The coming winter probably will not be so bad as last winter," he said, "but the situation will be a serious one, and there will be unemployment. The problem should be dealt with at once. I believe the Dominion Government should call a conference of the Provincial Premiers, together with representatives of certain municipalities, organized labor, and the railroads, to meet at Ottawa, close the doors, and, for four or five days consider seriously what can be done by co-operation between the Dominion, the Provinces, and the municipalities to handle the unemployment situation this winter. The burden is too great for any one of these to bear alone, and should be shared by all. The sooner we have such co-operation the better.

The speaker stated that the Commission had not undertaken in its investigations to deal with immediate conditions, and their recommendations were directed to the obtaining of permanent legislation with regard to unemployment.

The chief recommendation up to the present had been the organization of a Provincial system of labor bureaux, with the intention that later this might be superseded by a Federal system, and that this in turn would be linked up with a system on the other side of the line. Labor bureaux could not create work, but they could help to relieve congestion in one district by acting as a clearing house between this district and another where labor was needed. They could also provide a steady supply of labor for manufacturers, and thus save waste.

#### Await Statistics.

The commission did not feel that it could recommend compulsory unemployment insurance until such time as the shirkers had been weeded out, and full details concerning the unemployment situation were at hand.

Regarding these shirkers, he favored compulsory labor. First it would be necessary to obtain Federal legislation, but he believed that the Dominion authorities would second whatever action the Province might desire to take.

One important recommendation on the part of the committee, the form of which had not yet been agreed upon, concerned a Provincially supported back-to-the-land movement.

"We mean to make a recommendation," he said "providing for placing on the land under Provincial assistance, many of those people who no doubt, could be made good agriculturists, and who, with limited assistance in money and stock, could be given a reasonable opportunity of becoming self-supporting and independent citizens, who would aid in extending the area of agricultural settlement."