

Vancouver Centre - Vancouver Rehabilitation, 4/1-15 (3)
Oct 1943 - April 1944

REPORT

of the

Post-War

Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

Committee

of

The New Westminster Board of Trade



March - 1944

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REPORT of the Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Committee of The New Westminster Board of Trade March - 1944

OUR COMMITTEE has approached the subject of Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction as a complex problem which must be broken down into its component parts before being subjected to careful study. Our post-war plans have two aims, first the rehabilitation after the cessation of hostilities of those men and women in the armed services, and second the improvement of British Columbia industrially, agriculturally, socially and morally. While many of our recommendations refer to the City of New Westminster we have not confined ourselves to a narrow view of the subject and in fact the principles on which our recommendations are based make them applicable in most cases equally well to all parts of Canada or the world.

It is inevitable that some rehabilitation measures will involve the expenditure of considerable sums of public money but in your committee's opinion the following recommendations are based on good common sense, are in most cases self-liquidating, and in the aggregate will return to this Province in value many times their original cost.

For convenience the recommendations of your committee have been broken down into nine main headings, as follows, but it should be remembered that all of these topics are interrelated and indivisible and an underlying principle of conservation runs through all.

1. Harbour and Waterfront Development.
2. Highways.
3. Housing.
4. Lumbering.
5. Industry.
6. Fishing.
7. Agriculture.
8. Conservation.
9. Racial Minorities and Immigration.

HARBOUR AND WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

Your committee recommends:

1. Local Rail Service

A study of the railway freight servicing facilities of the City indicates a situation which is badly in need of adjustment. The large number of tracks paralleling Front Street belonging to four railroad companies should be susceptible to relocation and their numbers reduced from five and six parallel tracks to a maximum of three. This would provide sufficient trackage for the through traffic and release potentially valuable land for more useful purposes. Consideration should be given to a plan of having all railway freight traffic entering or passing through the City handled by one authority, such as a Terminal Railway Company.

2. Fish Boat Berths

At the present time there are very inadequate berthing facilities provided for the fishing fleet, and these facilities together with those providing Marine fuels tend to prevent the use of the waterfront for the purpose for which it was intended, deep sea berthing. Consideration should be given to their removal to a more suitable site.

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3. Harbour Expansion

The natural direction of expansion closing of the space between the foot of sea berth in that location. This would about the foot of Fourth Street and at one time, sufficient for the requirement greatly appreciate the appearance of for a self sustaining asset.

4. Agricultural Products Handling

The establishing in the City and imported, should be carefully elsewhere are inadequate and obsolescence.

A new establishment provided greatly improve the free and economic importance. The Port of New Westminster area of the Lower Mainland and adjacent Valleys.

5. City Improvement

There is an opportunity now the B. C. Electric station west of way tracks at that point and a of their present sites would fore same time provide services for Front Street could be continued and thus provide a waterfront station stations valuable business

Furthermore, planning should improving same, so that it could Arm of the Fraser at least as extension to Marpole. (See also

6. Highway Facilities

Finally emphasis should road connecting the interior of prove of inestimable value to dependable means of communication services could provide the plan again. (See also Section 8 on

Your committee recommends following highways:

1. Low Level Industrial

It is recommended that industrial highway from the should be located to contain Lumber Company, thence to the City. It may involve the City and Railway use the

2. Ewen Avenue

It is recommended boundary of the City. Since bridge, it would be necessary

3. Brunette Street

It is recommended the City in time to complete this Highway to

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3. Harbour Expansion

The natural direction of expansion of harbour facilities for deep sea traffic would seem to be in the closing of the space between the foot of Eighth Street and the foot of Tenth Street by providing a deep sea berth in that location. This would provide a continuous quay dock from the foot of Royal Avenue to about the foot of Fourth Street and would give ample berthing facilities for eight average deep sea ships at one time, sufficient for the requirements of the Port for some time to come. This improvement would greatly appreciate the appearance and facilities of the Port and provide employment of men and material for a self sustaining asset.

4. Agricultural Products Handling Facilities

The establishing in the City of facilities for the distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables, both local and imported, should be carefully considered. It seems apparent that present facilities of this nature located elsewhere are inadequate and obsolete and their location at present does not lend itself to enlargement or modernization.

A new establishment providing cool and cold storage space near water and rail transportation should greatly improve the free and economical handling and distribution of this item of vital local and national importance. The Port of New Westminster could become the "New Market" of the Greater Metropolitan area of the Lower Mainland adjacent as we are to the agricultural areas of the Fraser and Okanagan Valleys.

5. City Improvement

There is an opportunity now, before certain areas are built up, to improve that section of the City from the B. C. Electric station westward to the point where Tenth Street intersects. A revision of the many railway tracks at that point and a relocation of both the B. C. Electric and C. P. R. Stations to a point west of their present sites would forever remove the hazards of mixed highway and railway traffic and at the same time provide services for rail and interurban traffic more in keeping with the times. Furthermore, Front Street could be continued in a westerly direction to intersect with what is now old Columbia Street and thus provide a waterfront by-pass for highway traffic of an industrial nature. By removing the present stations valuable business blocks are made available in the only area left for expansion.

Furthermore, planning should be done along the lines of extending old Columbia Street westerly and improving same, so that it could function as a feeder to the City from the industrial area along the North Arm of the Fraser to Marpole. (See also Sections 1 and 9 under "Highways.")

6. Highway Facilities

Finally emphasis should be placed on the desirability of completing the often proposed all weather road connecting the interior of the Province with the coast. The Hope-Princeton/Okanagan Highway should prove of inestimable value to the residents of both the coast and the interior providing as it would a short dependable means of communication between peoples and products too long separated. Overnight freight services could provide the people of the coast area with the wonderful agricultural products of the Okanagan. (See also Section 8 under "Highways.")

HIGHWAYS

Your committee recommends that the City of New Westminster be urged to construct or improve the following highways:

1. Low Level Industrial Highway

It is recommended that the City secure a right of way 66 feet in width and construct a low level industrial highway from the foot of Tenth Street along the North Arm of the Fraser River. This road should be located to continue the old Columbia Street along the Pacific Coast Terminals and Mohawk Lumber Company, thence along the right of way of the Canadian National Railway to the west boundary of the City. It may involve a re-arrangement of tracks so that both the Canadian National Railway and Lulu Is and Railway use the tracks of the latter.

2. Ewen Avenue

It is recommended that Ewen Avenue be improved from the bridge across the North Arm to the West boundary of the City. Should a high level bridge be built in a different location than the present Lulu Island bridge, it would be necessary to make adjustments in Ewen Avenue to connect.

3. Brunette Street

It is recommended that Brunette Street be improved from Columbia Street to the East boundary of the City in time to connect traffic with the Lougheed Highway, when the Provincial Government completes this Highway to the Pitt River Bridge.

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4. **Cut Off Road to Sixth Avenue**
It is recommended that the City secure a right of way and construct a new road from the intersection of Twelfth Street and running North of and parallel to the Highland Park branch of the D. C. E. R. to Sixth Avenue.
5. **Eighth Avenue**
It is recommended that Eighth Avenue be improved from end to end, as it is the only straight road which crosses the City from West to East. It should be made a first class highway.
6. **Express Highway to Vancouver**
Your committee further recommends that the Provincial Government be urged to construct or complete the construction of the following highways:
It is recommended that the Board of Trade and the City of New Westminster co-operate with the Department of Public Works with a view to so locating this Express Highway between the Pattullo Bridge and Vancouver that it will be most readily accessible for use by our city.
7. **Lougheed Highway**
The early completion of the Lougheed Highway is recommended in order to give the agricultural areas North of the Fraser River easier access to New Westminster and Vancouver.
8. **Hope-Princeton Highway**
The early completion of the Hope-Princeton Highway is recommended in order to give the Okanagan Districts easier access to New Westminster and Vancouver.
9. **Low Level Industrial Highway**
It is recommended that the low level industrial highway referred to in Section I be extended westward from the City boundary in the direction of Marpole, following the North Arm of the Fraser River as closely as is practical.

HOUSING

HOUSING

It is a generally acknowledged fact that during the transition period of industry from a war basis to a peace basis it will be necessary to provide employment on a large scale which must of necessity take the form of public works, or employment which can be taken care of by the construction industry. It is inevitable that under this heading the construction of new homes will play a major part. An extensive public works programme can be carried out only by the State, involving as it does the providing of large sums of money which necessitates the continuation of taxation at a very high rate in order to pay for this programme. On the other hand Housing as a works programme can be provided on a self-liquidating loan basis, and unquestionably will provide a wider type of employment than any other works programme which can be carried out.

It is the considered opinion of your committee that definite plans should be made at once, setting out the basis on which loans will be available for the construction of homes and also on what basis credits will be provided to municipal governments to install the necessary services such as sewers, roads and sidewalks in areas which can be developed for housing purposes.

Dealing with the question of the Municipal problem first, your committee wishes to point out that we have in our city a large area in the Reservoir District suitable for development as a residential area and it will be of the utmost importance that the credits required by the City to develop this area should be available immediately at the end of the war.

There is another problem to which your committee gave considerable thought and that was the method or plan which could be followed to set up what might be termed a Demolition Fund, out of which could be purchased at an appraised value the old home of any property owner desirous of erecting a modern home, but felt he could not do so without some financial assistance. This is a problem of every city in Canada and it is imperative that some scheme be worked out to meet this phase of housing and re-housing the people of this country.

the people of this country.

Your committee also gave some thought and consideration to the question of development of lands adjacent to the City of New Westminster for the construction of homes for men and women working in the industries of our city. In view of the interest which the City of New Westminster has in the development of the Fraser Valley your committee feels that there should be a recommendation in its report as to the advisability of Housing Act money being made available for the construction of homes and farm buildings on land in the Fraser Valley adjacent to the City of New Westminster. It is the feeling of your committee that the prosperity of these areas is so linked with the business life of our City that it should be well within the scope of our Board of Trade to make recommendations with reference to home construction in the areas immediately contributory to our City, if not throughout the entire Fraser Valley. In this connection it was the feeling of your committee that some plan should be worked out in our post-war rehabilitation programme under which land at present idle in Surrey could be cleared and subdivided into one- or two-

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acre lots and funds made available under the idea behind the scheme would be to get our money provide them with a part time occupation, the feeling of your committee that a scheme also co-related recommendations under "A

NATION

Your committee is of the opinion that an office of the Federal Housing Authority that can help the people get the flow of loans to those wishing them, and your committee sees it this is an important step home. Up to the present loans under the City. It is important in the Post-War period parts of the City.

Under Part 11 of the National Housing, Your Committee wishes to suggest that the plan under which Municipal authorities that the plan worked out and ready at the end of the year should be brought to the attention of the Government.

Since lumber and wood products are produced in the Westminister and since these industries depend to a large measure on separate head.

Your committee had originally made a study of the situation at Ottawa. After a study of this report covering the purely local sit-

Accordingly your committee :

1. That the Board of Trade and Shingle Association in their
2. That the Board of Trade section under "Conservation

Your committee wishes to

1. In the immediate post-World War II period, Canada was going to be forcibly reoriented towards the United States. This will be due partly to the expected opening up of the American market to the desire of manufacturers to diversify their production for stability.
2. Any large influx of foreign capital will be cheaper hydro-electric power.
3. Your committee recommends:
 - (a) Study the requirements of various industries not now located in the West.
 - (b) Study the facilities available in the West.
 - (c) Make definite effort to attract foreign investment.
 - (d) Study the situation in the various industries healthy and flourishing in the United States.

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acre lots and funds made available under the Housing Act to construct homes and farm buildings. The idea behind the scheme would be to get our mill and factory workers settled on a plot of ground which would provide them with a part time occupation should there be seasonal lay offs in our industries. It was the feeling of your committee that a scheme as outlined above would meet with considerable success. (See also co-related recommendations under "Agriculture.")

NATIONAL HOUSING ACT

Your committee is of the opinion that a recommendation should be made to the proper authority that an office of the Federal Housing Authority be set up in the City of New Westminster to facilitate the flow of loans to those wishing them, and where inquiries can be made regarding housing act loans. As your committee sees it this is an important step in getting loans into the hands of people desiring to build homes. Up to the present loans under the National Housing Act have been made in selected parts of the City. It is important in the Post-War period that loans should be available under the Housing Act in all parts of the City.

Under Part II of the National Housing Act loans are available for the construction of low rental housing. Your Committee wishes to suggest that it should be brought to the attention of the Provincial and Municipal authorities that the plan under which this money will be used in the Post-War period should be worked out and ready at the end of the war. As these loans require a provincial guarantee when made to a municipal authority and require fixed municipal taxation if made to a private corporation, this matter should be brought to the attention of the proper authority in connection with Post-War Rehabilitation so that a scheme can be worked out which would have the co-operation of the Provincial and Municipal Governments.

LUMBERING

Since lumber and wood products represent the major manufactured products of the Port of New Westminster and since these industries have their own peculiar set of problems due in part to the fact that they depend to a large measure on export trade, your committee has chosen to deal with them under a separate head.

Your committee had originally planned to prepare a brief dealing with this industry, and had in fact made a study of the situation when it developed that the report of the British Columbia Lumber and Shingle Association was completed and being submitted to the Special Committee dealing with Rehabilitation at Ottawa. After a study of this report it was evident that any attempt on our part to make a separate report covering the purely local situation would be superfluous.

Accordingly your committee recommends:

1. That the Board of Trade endorse the recommendations made by the British Columbia Lumber and Shingle Association in their current rehabilitation report being submitted to Ottawa.
2. That the Board of Trade endorse the principle of conservation as applied to this industry. (See also section under "Conservation.")

INDUSTRY

Your committee wishes to make the following observation and recommendations:

1. In the immediate post-war years many large manufacturing firms at present located in Eastern Canada are going to be forcibly impressed by the desirability of locating branch factories in British Columbia. This will be due partly to the growing population and importance of Western Canada and partly to the expected opening up of great trade opportunities in the Pacific area. It may also be motivated by the desire of manufacturers to divide their manufacturing interests to attain greater labor and raw material stability.
2. Any large influx of industries into this area is possible only with the development of more and cheaper hydro-electric power.
3. Your committee recommends the appointment of an "Industrial Development Committee" to:
 - (a) Study the requirements as regards site, power, labor, water, market and raw materials, of the various industries not now located in the New Westminster area.
 - (b) Study the facilities which might be offered these industries in this port; and
 - (c) Make definite efforts to encourage logical industries to locate in New Westminster.
 - (d) Study the situation and if necessary make recommendations calculated to keep our present industries healthy and flourishing.

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(e) Study and if considered necessary bring in recommendations with respect to the location of air fields in the New Westminster area and the adaption of such sites to air transportation and private plane use. Consideration should also be given to the use of such air fields for the sale, servicing and repair of both commercial and private planes.

FISHING

Your committee endorses the recommendations of the Provincial Post-War Rehabilitation Council and believes that the growth of the fishing industry is overwhelmingly dependent on conservation.

AGRICULTURE

The part that agriculture must play in the post-war rehabilitation of returned men is necessarily large and its problems are so complex that they require the careful study of trained agriculturists. It is, from this distance, easy to see the shortcomings of the schemes which followed the First Great War and it is our duty now to develop plans which will succeed when the present conflict is over.

To be successful these plans must:

1. Settle reasonably large numbers of returned men on the land.
2. Provide every reasonable opportunity for the individual to make a fair living so that by far the largest percentage of the settlers will remain permanently on the land on which they are located.

Your committee believes that at the outset it is necessary to adopt the following principles:

1. Settlement should be completed first in areas already provided with social services. There will always be a small minority who prefer the frontiers and new areas opened up will provide for these as settlement of the older areas is completed.
 2. The cleared acreage on which a man is placed must be of sufficient size to be an economic unit so that he will have every reasonable chance to make a living for himself and his family. The size of this acreage will depend on whether the settler is to be a full-time or a part-time farmer and also on the kind of farming to be practised.
 3. The cost of the land to the returned man must be calculated on its productive value at the long term average farm produce prices, irrespective of the actual cost of the land cleared and put in proper shape for farming operations.
 4. Land should not be turned over to the prospective settler until it is in proper shape for farming operations and this might be defined as being cleared, drained or dyked as required, and lined. Buildings, livestock and equipment are of course necessary and provision is made for them under the Veterans' Land Act.
 5. The settler must within reason have the privilege of selecting the district in which he wishes to live, but this and the soil as well must be suitable for the kind of farming in which he wishes to engage.
 6. The settler must be given preliminary training or apprenticeship and this should be followed by proper supervision over a basic period of several years.
- Working on the assumption in Principle 1 it becomes necessary to develop areas contiguous to Vancouver and New Westminster. This brings us to the principle that it is just as necessary to plan for the development of this area as to conduct town planning in the development of cities such as New Westminster and Vancouver. For this reason your committee recommends:

A Land Use Survey of the Fraser Valley

Throughout the Fraser Valley we have soils varying in texture from light gravelly soils lying on steep slopes to heavy low lying soils, and associated with this we have a climate varying from heavy rainfall with resulting extreme leaching in the winter months to extreme drought in July and August. This results in drought conditions on all soils but particularly on the light lying soils. This shortage of soil moisture accentuates the need for conserving ground water supplies to a maximum degree and brings up the question of efficient land use. This cannot be determined for any locality except through an effective "Land Use Survey."

A "Land Use Survey" is based essentially on soil surveys and it is interesting to note that the entire Fraser Valley has been soil surveyed. It is to be expected that a "Land Use Survey" might designate certain logged off areas which should be reforested and set up as perpetual forest reserves free from any land clearing or agriculture. Other districts would be mapped out as being suitable for general farming, poultry raising, small fruits, nut culture or other small holdings depending on soil types, water supply and general topography.

It would seem that this survey should be conducted by the Provincial Government and be made by a committee consisting possibly of a soils man, a crops man and a forester with facilities for consultation with water engineers, electrical engineers and geographers.

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Since the Fraser Valley is already reasonably well settled it is obvious that large numbers of returned men could be settled in this area only if the following steps were taken:

1. The farms formerly operated by Japanese should be made available. Recent press dispatches appearing since this report was originally compiled indicate that the Dominion Government has already established a favorable policy in this regard.
2. Large scale mechanical land clearing should be undertaken at Government expense. This of course should be done only on the recommendations of the "Land Use Survey."
3. Reclamation of areas involving soils of good texture which are badly in need of proper drainage and liming. Hatzic Prairie and the districts lying north of Pitt Meadows might fall into this category. In addition there is said to be a considerable acreage of land in the immediate vicinity of Vancouver and New Westminster which could be reclaimed by dyking projects.

Some of the additional benefits which would accrue to the system of rehabilitation recommended in this report follow:

1. It would be possible to have consolidated farming blocks rather than scattered farms separated by areas of bush.
2. This would permit economical rural electrification and telephone service, community use of farm equipment, better and cheaper social services and in some cases local reservoirs and water piping.
3. It would permit settlement of two types of settlers, the full time farmer on relatively large holdings, and the part time farmer on small holdings closer to the city. The man on the small holding could supplement his income by working in seasonal industries in the city and by fishing. This would benefit the community also in that it would provide intermittent labor of a good type for seasonal occupations. (See also Section under "Housing.")

CONSERVATION

Your committee would like to point out to the members of the Board that almost every angle of rehabilitation and reconstruction is tied up directly or indirectly with conservation. The post-war era is going to be an era of conservation. May we point out a few of its effects on our industry and life.

1. **Lumbering**
The future of this business is dependent on properly using what we have and in reforestation.
2. **Fishing**
Conservation can bring back the Fraser River to one of the world's great fishing streams.
3. **Power**
Development of hydro-electric power is conservation. This in turn is dependent on conservation of the watersheds through establishment of parks, forest fire control and reforestation.
4. **Agriculture**
Dependent on soil conservation, erosion control and water supply conservation through reforestation.
5. **Recreation and the Tourist Industry**
Again dependent to the greatest extent on conservation.

Your committee believes that a widespread application of the principles of conservation is possible only through education of the people and this education should start with the children. In recommending education on conservation your committee sets out the following principles or requirements governing this type of education:

1. A deep complete and permanent conception of the meaning of conservation. There is no single definition of the word but it may be described as "wise use." It includes also "sustained production" and represents the proper administration of resources for the welfare of all. It involves keeping our resources such as land, timber, fish, range, and water supplies in a state of high productivity and used on a crop basis.
2. Every citizen must have as complete a knowledge as is possible of the resources we possess. Most people do not know what we possess and are therefore little concerned about the tremendous wastages which are so evident in this province.
3. Every citizen must practice conservation. Most of us have been shocked at some time or other at the glaring examples of lack of conservation but this has not been enough to stop them. It will take a broad movement by a well informed public, thinking and practising conservation to compel action along right lines.

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RACIAL MINORITIES AND IMMIGRATION

Your committee feels that no report of this nature would be complete without mention of this important subject. We can make plans to bring in new industry and improve our community but, from our perhaps selfish point of view, we cannot reap the maximum benefit from this unless our Government adopts a policy which will preserve this Province for people of the white races. Your committee therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Government adopt a policy which will prevent the re-establishment of people of the Japanese race in the coastal areas of British Columbia. Admittedly such a policy would work a hardship on some 10,000 Canadian born Japanese, but would not this be much less of an injustice than that which would be done to some hundreds of thousands or even millions of white Canadians if the Japanese were allowed to stay? For practical purposes it may be said that the Japanese are non-assimilable. Their rate of increase is over five times the rate of increase of the white people of this Province and under the conditions existing before the war it was the considered opinion of those in possession of the facts that it would have been a matter of less than forty years until the Japanese population exceeded the white population of B. C. In almost every activity, particularly farming and fishing, we have been unable to compete with them due in part to their lower standard of living. Surely if we reinstate the pre-war conditions we will be merely building up trouble and possible bloodshed and setting the stage for the eventual exclusion of the white man from B. C. Whatever policy is decided upon will inevitably work a hardship on some. Let us adopt the policy which will work the least hardship on the fewest number of people and preserve B. C. for our children.
2. That the Government adopt a policy towards the white minorities of non-British descent which will eventually effect their assimilation as useful accepted members of our society. It would appear that this policy should include clauses which would prevent segregation and the resulting language barriers.
3. That the Government adopt an immigration policy based on the recognition of the fact that Canada needs a greater population. We wish to stress the danger of admitting persons of a non-assimilable race, while pointing out the advantages of having the preponderance of immigrants from English speaking countries, yet a reasonable admixture of non-English speaking white peoples preferably from northern or temperate climates.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion your committee wishes to make the following observations and recommendations:

1. The statements, ideas and recommendations in this report represent the considered, honest and unanimous opinion of all members of your committee. Individual interests have been entirely submerged. It is recognized that there will be divergence of opinion among Board members on some points but this is considered to be a not unhealthy situation and one conducive to constructive thinking and discussion.
2. It is your committee's opinion that post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction is a problem requiring the closest co-operation between the various cities, towns and municipalities of British Columbia, between the nine provinces of Canada and between the members of the United Nations. Your committee cannot hold with the view that a difference in interests exists between New Westminster and Vancouver and recommends that decisions affecting the two cities be made on the basis of the common good, believing that in the long run, what is good for one city will also be good for the other. With this in mind it is recommended:
3. That the City of New Westminster employ the services of an unprejudiced commercial town planner and that every effort be made to work in conjunction with the City of Vancouver so that the whole Metropolitan area may be planned as a unit. This report makes one recommendation which involves the moving of a group of wholesalers from Vancouver to New Westminster and it is to be expected that similar moves in the opposite direction could be recommended and substantiated. It is your committee's view that a neutral town planner could weigh such suggestions with an unbiased mind and make recommendations in the common good. The above remarks apply equally as well to the relations of New Westminster to the Fraser Valley, the Okanagan and all other parts of the province.
4. It is recommended that if a town planner is employed this and similar reports be submitted to him so that he can select the good points and discard those which may be premature, impractical or otherwise undesirable.
5. It is recommended that the Board of Trade adopt an active policy on the matter of rehabilitation and reconstruction, appointing further committees for the study of the problem and making timely recommendations to the proper authorities as the executive may see fit.

Respectfully submitted this tenth day of March, 1944.

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