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labor force propensity of old persons is not likely to go below prewar levels. Declines for this group were due in the past to the widening of social security (Sec. 5), but the extension of old age insurance in the postwar period cannot, so far as the number covered is concerned, do more than take the place of charity in the prewar.

All in all, a peacetime return to prewar labor force propensities is foreseeable, provided permanent casualties are not extreme. The labor force, therefore, is likely to be larger than before this war only in proportion to the population growth. Our prospective problem is to find jobs in peacetime industry for those members of the normal labor force who are in the service or in civilian jobs that end with the war.

Even if the wartime additions to the labor force do withdraw, their jobs cannot all be turned over to the returning soldiers, because a great many of these jobs also will evaporate with the war. Many jobs, however, that have temporarily been filled by civilian newcomers, will be restored to the primary wage earners and many of the persons withdrawing from the *total* labor force will be service men themselves who leave to go back to school. The withdrawals that do occur, moreover, will relieve the pressure for jobs at a very crucial time. As the standards of employability rise again, the percentage of unemployables among these wartime additions, considering who they are, would surely become quite big and the exodus from the labor force will avert a considerable part of the unemployment certain to occur even in the face of a strong demand for labor.

### CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion of this paper is that the possibilities of net additions to the normal labor force in wartime have been exaggerated. When from a tenth to a third of the normal labor force goes into the military services the civilian labor force apparently suffers a net loss. If American, British, and German peacetime experience is typical, the labor force is not very sensitive to economic shocks; and differences in labor force propensities among nations are accounted for in large part by traditional differences in social structures, and do not reflect disparities in national management.

The wartime evidence supports five conclusions. First, most of the supposed additions to the normal labor force in World War I were illusory. Perhaps in none of the three countries was the illusion greater than in the United States.

Second, in this war some real net increases in the total labor force

have been made in all three countries. They were bigger than in the preceding, because much greater reserves doubtless existed outside the labor force after two decades of falling births and rising school enrollment and improving old age security. Before this war the United States reserve propensity was probably highest. Nevertheless, none of the three countries was able in either war to keep up its civilian labor force from its native population.

Third, the labor force propensity in the United States is still far below that in Britain, although it has already risen as much in this country as it rose during two years of peril in Great Britain. It is not, however, safe to view the high British propensities as goals for this country. Seemingly unattributable to either superior war management or patriotism, they are in direct proportion to the smaller percentage of British women with children to care for and the smaller percentage of British children attending school. These differences between the two countries are longstanding.

Fourth, although during 1942 withdrawals of males 20-44 from the American civilian labor force were replaced by females and elderly men and young boys, during 1943 the withdrawals were hardly replaced at all. During 1944 it is proposed to induct another million or so men, a large percentage of whom will be fathers. One source to replace them is women and school children. Full- or part-time work by students will be resisted by parents and educators as well as by the children themselves; part-time work will be further blocked by the difficulties employers find in using them effectively. Women will be averse to working full- or part-time as overtime employment of wage earners and the drying up of household services add to their chores at home. The more work the government succeeds in stimulating persons already in the civilian labor force to turn out, the fewer additional persons is it likely to get to replace its withdrawals for military service.

Finally, judging from the past stability of the labor force propensity, most of the war additions to the labor force seem likely to go out with the war's end, leaving the labor force larger only by reason of the growth in population. If so, we shall be able to concentrate on converting war jobs to peace without being troubled much with creating new jobs, especially if a military force of two or three million men is maintained. Those who believe that children and married women are most effective in school and in the nursery will welcome this simplification of the postwar job problem.