

Britain Planning to Send Her Jobless Millions to Australia and New Zealand

by Walter G. Fuller (*Special Correspondent of The Eagle*)

“Britain’s idle men for the Empire’s idle acres” is likely to be the slogan for a great government boost of emigration to Australia and New Zealand within the next few months.

The government has recently announced its intention to back with money and goodwill a large-scale attempt to ship unemployed men and women to the British Dominions beyond the seas. Of course, these emigrants must be of the right type: young, healthy, and of good character – men and women who are likely to make good in their new environment.

This whole question of emigration and its relation to unemployment in Britain has been strangely neglected since the war, with the result that men and women eager to escape from Britain’s overcrowded labour market and to make their new home beyond the seas, but lacking the money to pay the high cost of ocean travel, have been literally imprisoned within the boundaries of these overcrowded British Isles.

Many people hold that here we have one of the roots of the unemployment problem. Before the war anybody could easily beg or borrow enough money to pay for a one-way trip to New York, and there friendly Uncle Sam was ready to welcome every newcomer.* So,

for all practical purposes, America, nowadays, is ruled out as an escape for Britain’s surplus population, and we have to look elsewhere.

The most optimistic of our economists tell us that we shall have a million adult unemployed in Britain for many years to come. This means that the taxpayer will have to go on paying not less than \$500,000,000 a year in unemployment doles.

Now the Baldwin government has definitely taken up the idea, and has this week declared in detail what it is prepared to do in the matter.

Beginning next June, it will be possible for a British subject who is acceptable to the Australian Government as a settler to obtain a ticket for his or her passage to Australia at one half the ordinary fare – that is, for about \$50. In certain circumstances the whole amount of the fare will be advanced to the candidate. Free passage will be granted to children under 12 years of age in the case of Australia and for all young persons under the age of 19 in the case of New Zealand.

This scheme has strongly impressed British public opinion, which regards it as the most popular thing the Baldwin government has done.

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* I believe the *Eagle* may have left out a passage here about the changed postwar conditions of emigration to the United States. gpw