



ALTHOUGH 53 employees of Aberdeen Combworks Ltd., were told this morning they were now redundant, following a fire last Friday which destroyed half the factory, they were assured they would get their jobs back in the future.

Of the 53 paid off, 23 were part-time workers and only seven were men.

"But we want them back as soon as we are back into production," stressed Mr. J. Scott, chairman of the board.

"We want to put the past behind us and forge ahead to the future," said Mr. Scott.

The firm were most anxious to retain the high-class workmen they had.

CLEARANCE

Mr. Scott paid tribute to the people of Aberdeen who had offered help. Also to 80 of their labour force, who had been at work since Monday and contractors engaged to help with salvage and demolition work.

Over 60 employees turned up for a meeting this morning in the factory canteen, and were told by Mr. Hugh Smith, resident director, and Mr. R. Drummond, production supervisor, that everything was being done to start production as soon as possible.

Combworks: 53 workers redundant

Site clearance is now well advanced, said Mr. Smith.

Today, a storage hut was completed, another is about ready, and plans for the erection of a third are going ahead. A garage is also being converted into a store-room.

CHALLENGE

"During last Friday night it seemed a complete and absolute disaster. But by dawn on Saturday morning we were beginning to think in terms of the opportunity and challenge that this presented."

A management team was formed, allocating each senior executive a function. They have been holding meetings daily, reviewing progress during the previous day and planning for that particular day.

By Sunday, phone communications were restored, emergency power supplied to buildings still standing and labour

was ready for duty on Monday.

Less than a week after the fire destroyed half their premises including their main 40,000 sq. ft. production area, the combworks yesterday landed a new contract for 500,000 mouldings used in connection with detonators.

NEW MACHINERY

Since Sunday, the firm have ordered £105,000 worth of new machinery. The first three of these machines are due to be delivered next week.

Besides the contract for the detonator mouldings, ACW Ltd. have been advised by customers that three more major contracts which were pending will go on.

● In the picture above, Mr. Robert Drummond, production superintendent, talks to the female staff in the Aberdeen Combworks canteen.



Mr. Anthony Hepper (above), chairman of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders Ltd., which is seeking further financial assistance from the Government, today saw Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Minister of Technology. No statement was issued after the meeting.

On Tuesday, Mr. Benn told the Scottish TUC that he was expecting to receive within a few days the recommendations of the Shipbuilding Industry Board on the group's application.