

BIG RISE IN FEMALE EMPLOYMENT

A "remarkable rise" in the number of working women in Canada was described recently to delegates attending a one-day consultation in Ottawa on changing patterns in female employment. Organized by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour, the meeting examined past, present and possible future trends in the female working world. Talks were given by Dr. Sylvia Ostry, Chief of the Research and Analysis Section (Labour Division) of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, and by Professor Noah Meltz, Department of Political Economy, University of Toronto and Scarborough College.

Dr. Ostry pointed out that the proportion of adult women who went out to work had risen from 14 per cent in 1901 to 30 per cent last year. At present, the female share of the total working population, of both sexes, was rapidly approaching 33 per cent. More women in all age groups — except teenagers — were now earning a living, with the greatest increase occurring in the middle and older-age groups. These groups were composed mainly of married women with children, most of whom were, in fact, re-entering the labour force.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

"For the first time in this century a two-phase working cycle has emerged — a phenomenon already apparent in the United States a decade or more earlier", said Dr. Ostry. "In recent decades," she went on, "there has been a marked expansion of jobs which are considered especially suitable for feminine employment. This growth has opened up new opportunities for women, opportunities to supplement family income in a society which places ever-greater emphasis on rising material standards of life. Further to this end, social barriers to the employment of married women have largely crumbled as a consequence of marked changes in the attitude of employers, no doubt stimulated by the pace and direction of economic growth."

Dr. Ostry added that basic improvements in "household technology" and the ready availability of commercial substitutes for most household products had "at least potentially" freed women to compete in the labour market, "or for improved housekeeping, child-care or more coffee-parties and bridge-games".

FARM LABOUR PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

Members of the National Agricultural Manpower Committee, who met in Ottawa recently to discuss the farm labour situation, were told by the chairman, Mr. Tom Kent, Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, that all agencies concerned must redouble recruitment efforts if critical shortages were to be averted this year. Mr. Kent said that increased competition for labour, a buoyant economy

and high employment meant greater competition for the manpower available for seasonal farm labour at harvest time.

Attending the meeting were provincial deputy ministers of Agriculture and senior officials, federal Deputy Ministers of Agriculture and Labour and senior officials of federal departments.

PROVINCIAL FORECASTS

A forecast of provincial expectations predicted shortages of seasonal workers in Ontario partly on account of a planned acreage increase. The employment of Indians, a policy that had already been well received and had proved beneficial both to growers and Indians, would probably be increased. Last year 550 Indians were employed in harvesting; this year, it was predicted, an effort would be made to recruit nearly twice that number.

From British Columbia it was reported that shortages of farm labour were expected in the Okanagan Valley, particularly in September. Alberta expected to recruit up to 2,500 Indians in the northern part of the province and in Saskatchewan. Although Saskatchewan had no serious problems with seasonal or casual workers, concern was felt about the shortage of specialized workers and the condition of the dairy-farm labour market.

Manitoba, which is now evaluating the success of a two-month pilot training course for farm workers, also reported a need for specialized, year-round workers. Quebec, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island reported no serious problems, but New Brunswick expected the "tight" labour situation of last year to continue.

EMPHASIS ON RECRUITING

The National Employment Service announced plans to deal with labour shortage situations and an intensification of the recruitment programme. More temporary offices were being established with a considerably enlarged number of staff, and new areas for recruitment were to be visited, including the outports of Newfoundland.

DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENTS

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, recently announced the following diplomatic appointments, which will become effective during the next few months:

Mr. Paul Tremblay, at present Permanent Representative and Ambassador to the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations in New York, to be Ambassador to Belgium with concurrent accreditation to Luxembourg, Mr. R.P. Bower, at present Ambassador to Japan, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, Mr. John Kenneth Starnes, at present Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany, to be Ambassador to the United Arab Republic.
