

## THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

**MARCH POSITION:** The Department of Labour announced that, employment had increased slightly during March indicating that the seasonal low in economic activity was probably reached in late February. While there was a small increase in unemployment, this was primarily due to an increase in the labour force. During the month ending March 20, the number of persons working 35 hours or more increased slightly and those working less than 35 hours dropped moderately.

While overall employment continued somewhat below last year's levels for the month, the year-to-year decline changed very little. Total labour requirements in the manufacturing, trade and service industries did not change appreciably during the month while construction and other outdoor activities showed a small seasonal increase.

## MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

Within manufacturing, employment levels were sustained in the electrical apparatus, chemical, food and beverage, motor vehicles and pulp and paper industries. Employment in the textile and clothing industries rose slightly by somewhat less than is usual for the month. There was a greater than usual seasonal increase in employment in the agricultural implement industry although employment was still considerably below last year's levels. Layoffs continued to occur in the iron and steel industries.

The civilian labour force, at 5,236,000 in the week ended March 20, 1954, showed little change from 5,230,000 in the week ended February 20, 1954, and an increase of somewhat under 1 per cent from 5,192,000 recorded in the week ended March 21, 1953. These estimates are obtained from the monthly labour force

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**FALL IN GOLD PRODUCTION:** Gold production continued to decline in January as compared with a year earlier, the month's output amounting to 293,049 fine ounces as compared with 371,265. Output in Ontario dropped to 160,916 fine ounces from 210,188, Quebec to 63,456 fine ounces from 97,388, and British Columbia to 20,504 fine ounces from 20,698. In the Northwest Territories there was a rise to 26,625 fine ounces from 22,369. Prairie Provinces to 20,719 fine ounces from 19,992, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia to 797 fine ounces from 630, and the Yukon to 32 fine ounces from nil.

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Divorce rate per hundred thousand population was lowest last year in Newfoundland at 2.3, highest in British Columbia at 120.2. Quebec had the second lowest rate, 6.4.

survey conducted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

During March completions of hauling operations in the logging industry contributed to higher levels of unemployment in the Atlantic region. At the same time scattered layoffs occurred in some manufacturing lines, and employment levels in the coal mining industry declined.

The number of persons at work in the Quebec region showed little change during March. Employment levels in manufacturing changed very little and layoffs were no heavier than usual in the seasonal industries.

## REGIONAL FACTORS

Economic activity in Ontario continued at low winter levels during March. Logging and woods operations continued downward, approaching the usual spring low point and activity in construction and agriculture was retarded by unsettled weather conditions during the month. Manufacturing employment continued below 1953 levels and showed a smaller seasonal increase than is usual for March.

Labour requirements in the Prairie region rose steadily through March partly as a result of increasing agricultural activity. The level of unemployment showed some corresponding reduction, although the decline did not match the gain in employment because of a seasonal increase in the labour force.

There was a marked seasonal improvement in the employment situation in the Pacific region during March, mainly due to increased activity in the logging, sawmilling and construction industries. This helped to stimulate labour demand in other industries in the region, resulting in a rise in full-time employment of 19,000 to 359,000 in March.

**CANADIAN GRAIN STOCKS:** Total stocks of the five major Canadian grains in all North American positions excluding Newfoundland at March 31 this year were estimated at 1,281,300,000 bushels, second only to the record 1,353,400,000 on hand at March 31, 1943, and well above last year's corresponding total of 1,165,400,000 bushels, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

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Manufacturers sold 366,498 TV sets last year, over two-and-a-half times as many as in 1952. Average factory price was down 8% to \$406 from \$442 per set.

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From the end of June 1946 to the end of June last year, 2,407 engineers emigrated to the United States.