

the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour. They were required to move the Japanese from the protected areas in British Columbia during the dark days of the war. Annuities come under our jurisdiction. The sale of annuities to the public has increased tremendously in the last few years. The Vocational Training Act comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour. This act laid the foundation of the enormous expansion of training which made possible the development of the greatest industrial structure in the life of this nation. I think, in a broad concept, these are the functions of the department. Of course I should point out that the basic principle of the right of labour to organize under the labour code comes under the jurisdiction of the department.

I have a statement which I can read in about fifteen minutes and it will probably answer hon. members' questions.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Read it.

Mr. MITCHELL: It has been asked for and I might as well read it.

Quite largely the estimates of the Department of Labour which are now before the committee illustrate the problems which we had to face once world war II ended—the training and reemployment of men and women demobilized from the armed forces and replacement of many thousands released by munitions plants. We have, too, the still important duty of doing our utmost to meet the labour demands for agriculture—a question of real emergency in view of the grave shortage of food in Europe as well as in Asia.

In spite of difficulties, I believe it may be stated that we are moving along very well benefited by the stabilization policy which was introduced the latter part of 1941. The first phase of our national industrial reconversion was passed in January last when all but one-sixth of war work in progress at V-J Day had been terminated. A total of 370,000 persons who had been employed in war plants were laid off after V-J day and sixty per cent of these were immediately or almost immediately reengaged for the production of civilian goods in the same plants. There were in all 860,000 persons employed in direct war work at the peak period October, 1943. Up to June 30 of this year there had been 883,006 discharged from the armed forces.

Through the veterans' placement division of the employment service positions were secured for 284,000 ex-servicemen and women during

the twelve months ending March 31 last. From April 1 to August 1 there were placed an additional 103,000 ex-service personnel. A considerable number of those released from munitions plants were married women and they did not all become an employment problem because of a preference to devote all their time to home-keeping. In a measure that has been true of some women discharged from the armed forces. Many had been married or were married after release and they, too, were not interested in work outside their homes. Under the style "Home Aid Plan" our employment offices are making a special effort to place women and girls in household work provided, however, that pay and conditions of work are fair.

The peak of unemployment was reached in April last when we had 267,000 unplaced applicants, men and women, registered at our national employment service offices across Canada. This total included 72,000 former service personnel discharged during March. On August 15, we had 149,000 unplaced persons listed comprising 116,000 men and 33,000 women. It is of interest to note that on the same date there were 68,000 vacancies for males and 44,000 vacancies for females. We have, of course, been doing our utmost to find positions for veterans and former war plant workers. Naturally we are keenly desirous of doing everything in our power for those who served overseas not forgetting those who did such a fine job on the home front during the years of war.

There are regional supervisors of veterans' placement in Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Each local office has what is known as an armed forces registration unit to look after veterans in the first instance. Then at all rehabilitation centres training through the department's facilities. Affairs—the Department of Labour has veterans' employment advisors who are doing good work. Where no such centres exist the advisors are stationed in the local employment offices. There is also a special placements division in the Department of Labour giving attention to physically handicapped persons. Some of these are referred for training through the department's facilities.

In the year ending March 31,—this is important—jobs were found for the handicapped at the rate of 1,250 a month, 25 per cent of them veterans.

I think this is a forward advance in the placement facilities of the employment service for the placement of handicapped persons under our jurisdiction.