

## REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

**RECORD LEVELS REACHED:** In a statement on February 20 the Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell, pointed out a number of important facts concerning employment activity during the past year.

Not only had record employment levels been reached throughout the past twelve months, he stated, but workers generally had shown a greater inclination to stay on the job than in any previous post-war year. As a result, both labour turnover and absenteeism had declined markedly.

This greater employment stability, along with large expenditures in most industries on new plant and equipment, helped to increase production. In 1948, employment of paid workers in manufacturing, for example, averaged one per cent more than in 1947 and the volume of manufacturing production rose by almost three per cent.

Total employment in Canada during 1948 averaged just under 4,800,000, Mr. Mitchell said, approximately 100,000 more than in 1947. The expansion was greatest amongst non-agricultural industries while employment in agriculture declined slightly.

### SUPPLY PROBLEMS

This employment expansion raised some important labour supply problems, specially since employment was already at a high level. A continuing movement of persons from rural to urban areas left agriculture, mining and other primary industries in need of more workers. Even with these additional workers, the expanded labour requirements of urban industries remained unsatisfied. Many more workers were needed, especially skilled men who were not available regionally or even within Canada.

A few large scale movements of labour, similar to those in previous years, were arranged to meet the peak seasonal requirements in agriculture. Others of a more permanent character were developed by the National Employment Service to move workers from labour surplus areas to areas where there was a strong demand.

In addition, the National Employment Service, in its day-to-day activities of matching men and jobs, helped to meet thousands of urgent labour needs. Altogether more than 700,000 placements were made throughout 1948. This means that on the average 60,000 placements were made every month by the 215 full time and branch offices throughout Canada.

By industries, the largest number of placements were made in services with a total of slightly more than 200,000. Manufacturing was second with approximately 175,000 placements and construction third with 116,000.

The immigration of many thousands of workers also helped to meet our labour needs. During 1948, more workers came to Canada from other countries than any other year since 1929. Many

of these came under special co-operative arrangements which were made between the Departments of Labour and Mines and Resources. They have helped to meet labour requirements in primary and secondary industries and in service occupations.

Another aspect of employment, upon which the Minister commented, was the extremely favourable situation which prevailed in the past year in industrial relations. Only 41,000 workers were involved in strikes during 1948 as compared with 104,000 in 1947 and 140,000 in 1946. Of even greater significance is the fact that 900,000 man-working days were lost as the result of strikes in 1948 as compared with 2,400,000 in the preceding year and more than 4,000,000 in 1946.

Commenting more specifically on employment activity in each region, Mr. Mitchell stated that conditions in the Maritimes showed definite improvement over the past year. Not only was the total number of persons employed in 1948 higher than in any other post-war year, but also a considerable number of workers moved to jobs in other provinces. The industrial relations record was particularly striking in the Maritimes with fewer than 20,000 man-working days lost as a result of strikes in 1948. Throughout the year, National Employment Service offices in these three provinces made 45,000 job placements.

### QUEBEC EXPANSION

Employment expanded significantly in Quebec during the past year to average 1,352,000 persons, an increase of 28,000 over 1947. The increase was sharpest in the non-agricultural industries. The generally high demand for almost all types of workers resulted in a total of 128,000 placements being made over the year. In the past year, hourly earnings of workers in Quebec rose more rapidly than in Canada as a whole.

In Ontario, all-time records were established for both industrial activity and employment during the past year. About 286,000 workers were placed in jobs by the National Employment Service and much of this hiring represented a basic expansion in employment. Total employment averaged 1,729,000 in this region during 1948. Almost one-half of the 125,000 immigrants who came to Canada during 1948 settled in Ontario.

Stability characterized the employment scene in the Prairie Provinces. There was a small shift of workers from agriculture to industry, but on the whole people tended to stay in their jobs and unemployment averaged less than two per cent of the labour force, the lowest in any region. Cash income to the farmers of the Prairie Provinces was the highest of any year on record. About 156,000 placements were made by National Employment Service offices in this region.

**SUPERSONIC RESEARCH:** Grants totalling \$350,000 for supersonic research are to be made to the University of Toronto by the Department of National Defence through the Defence Research Board, the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, and President Sidney Smith, of the University of Toronto, announced on February 24.

Of the total, \$250,000 is to be expended for building modifications and research equipment in establishing a supersonic aerodynamics research laboratory at Downsview Airport, Toronto. The remaining \$100,000 is to be expended over a three-year period to assist in defraying operating costs. The laboratory will be directed and operated by the University but title to the building and equipment will remain with the Department of National Defence.

The laboratory will function as a part of the University's Department of Aeronautical Engineering, headed by Prof. T.R. Loudon, and will be under the immediate direction of Dr. G.N. Patterson who has an international reputation in this field of research.

The main piece of equipment will be a wind tunnel capable of producing supersonic speeds up to Mach 10 (10 times the speed of sound).

Dr. O.M. Solandt, Chairman of the Defence Research Board, said that such a university laboratory would be of great value in meeting the needs of the National Research Council, the Defence Research Board and the aircraft industry for trained research workers. In time of emergency, he added, the laboratory would be available for applied research on supersonic aircraft, guided missiles and the ballistics of projectiles.

The building at Downsview is being turned over to the Defence Research Board by the Royal Canadian Air Force.

### KEY EQUIPMENT

Key piece of equipment in Varsity's new supersonic laboratory will be a steel sphere 40 feet in diameter, somewhat higher than a three-storey building. Dr. Sidney Smith said, commenting on the announcement. Air will be pumped from the sphere to create an almost perfect vacuum. Then, thoroughly dry and free of dust particles, it will be sucked back into the sphere at supersonic speed through a narrow throat in which its effect on stationary models will be observed and photographed.

He said the same vacuum sphere will also operate a number of smaller tunnels of special design required for basic problems in fluid dynamics.

Work on shock waves already is in progress at the University of Toronto and a 12-foot shock tube was constructed last year by graduate research workers under the direction of Dr. G.N. Patterson, Varsity's Professor of Aerodynamics. Using gases under various pressures, Dr. Patterson's group can send shock waves down the tube at speeds up to 3,000 miles an hour. In time they believe this equipment will generate speeds of 8,000 miles an hour.

Dr. Patterson is also a member of the aerodynamics panel at the U.S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory White Oak, Maryland, where he spends approximately one week a month. Native of Edmonton, Dr. Patterson graduated from the University of Alberta in 1931, took post-graduate work in the Department of Physics at the University of Toronto. He spent four years as scientific officer in the aerodynamics department of the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, England, and, in 1939, was appointed by the Australian Government to set up an aerodynamics research laboratory at Melbourne. He has carried on post-doctoral study and research at the California Institute of Technology and the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton.

**RENTAL REGULATIONS:** The Wartime Prices and Trade Board announced on February 23 that the powers of its Commissioners have been extended effective March 1, 1949 by a new Order so as to deal with cases in which a housing accommodation is operated as a rooming house by a tenant who does not live in the house. Such a tenant actually operates a rooming house business at arms length and cannot claim to need the protection of rental regulations in order to "preserve a roof over his head".

The new Order authorizes a Commissioner to exempt from rent control the lease of any house operated as a rooming house by a tenant who does not himself live therein; provided, of course, that the landlord of the house is willing to undertake the operation of it as a rooming house and that he has given to the Commissioner satisfactory assurances that he will extend to the occupants of the house the same rights, treatment and protection as they had been receiving from the previous operator of the house.

**ICAO VACANCY:** Member States of the International Civil Aviation Organization are being asked to submit applications for the position of Chief of the Administrative Bureau. Dr. Albert Roper, Secretary General, announced on February 21. The position will become vacant July 1 through the resignation of Mr. P.A. Cumyn, who is returning to private business.

**JANUARY EXPORTS:** Canada's merchandise exports showed a slight rise in January over the corresponding month of last year. During the month there was a further increase in the value of shipments to the United States and a sharp rise to India and Pakistan, but the movement of goods to the United Kingdom and European countries was again lower.

Figures released by the Bureau of Statistics place the value of domestic exports at \$237,000,000 as compared with \$235,400,000 in January last year.