

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR GIRLS

A comprehensive publication describing a wide variety of vocational and technical training courses for girls has recently been released for distribution, according to Mr. Michael Starr, Minister of Labour.

The brochure, entitled "Vocational and Technical Training for Girls", was prepared by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour. It lists courses available to girls at the post-high-school, high-school and trade-school levels.

Eight broad areas of training are covered, including art courses, commercial training, training for health and hospital occupations, home-economics courses, training for women as technicians and skilled tradesmen, teacher training, training for certain service occupations and a number of other training possibilities, including those available in the armed services.

Although the publication does not attempt to cover all the occupations open to women, it does explore career opportunities for the girl who is not planning to attend university. At the same time, the publication stresses the need to obtain as much education and training as possible before entering the world of work.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Claimants for unemployment insurance benefit numbered 386,000 on November 30, up from 268,700 on October 31 and down from 485,200 on November 30, 1960. Four out of five of the new claimants in November were males, whereas about 65 per cent of the persons on claim more than four weeks were males. Some 15,000 of the current total were identified as seasonal benefit, about the same as a year earlier.

Initial and renewal claims filed at local offices during November numbered 252,600, up from the total of a month earlier of 158,100 and down from the total of a year earlier of 304,400. Slightly more than 70 per cent of the November claims were initial, compared to 68 per cent a year earlier. The proportion of initial claims increases with the heavier volume of claims during the late fall and the winter.

The number of weekly beneficiaries in November averaged 209,800, compared to 173,300 in October and 272,900 in November 1960. Benefit payments in the month totalled \$20.9 million against \$17.1 million in the preceding month and \$26.6 million in the same 1960 month. Weekly payment per week compensated averaged \$23.76 in November against \$23.52 a month earlier and \$23.19 a year earlier.

FOOD-CHAIN STUDIES

The very foundation of the "pyramid of life" in the sea is the subject of an intensive and stimulating programme of research at the biological station of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada at Nanaimo, British Columbia. Scientists at this station are opening the door on increased knowledge of the tiny organisms, both plant and animal, that are at the

bottom of the food chain of the sea. These microscopic creatures and plants are present in greater numbers and higher concentration than any other form of life in the ocean. Yet, until now, serious gaps have existed in scientific information about them.

The current research programme in this field, described at the Board's annual meeting in Ottawa, is aimed at finding out as much as possible about these members of the phytoplankton and the zooplankton families - the number of different species, how fast each reproduces, how useful they are in the food chain.

NEW TECHNIQUES

To get this information, completely new techniques of investigation have been developed by scientists at the Nanaimo biological station. These include a method of isolating a body of water in a submerged plastic sphere where plant organisms are grown under conditions closely approaching those of nature.

To further laboratory research, electronic equipment has been adapted or developed specially for this purpose. Among the new devices is one that may enable scientists to monitor concentrations of new growths of plant organisms in the sea through aerial surveys.

The significance of these studies is enormous. In effect, the basic foodstuffs of the sea support all marine life, as their presence in quantity or otherwise determines the growth and survival of the next higher organism, and so on.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEXES

Consumer price indexes rose in three of the ten regional cities in November and December 1961, declined in four and remained unchanged in three. Increases and decreases ranged narrowly between 0.1 per cent and 0.2 per cent.

Food indexes declined in six cities and rose in four. Shelter indexes were unchanged in five cities, down in three and up in two. Clothing indexes increased in five cities, decreased in four and were unchanged in the remaining city. Household-operation indexes rose in five cities, dropped in two, and were unchanged in the other three. Indexes for "other commodities and services" were unchanged in seven cities, up in two and down in one.

SALMON SPAWNING RESEARCH

Studies on hormones in Pacific salmon have recently been extended to include the Atlantic salmon. All five species of Pacific salmon die after spawning, while many Atlantic salmon do not. The present studies, undertaken with a view to gaining a better understanding of this phenomenon, were outlined at the recent annual meeting of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada. Results to date show that there is an impaired elimination of hormones in spawned Pacific salmon which does not occur with spawned Atlantic salmon. This research is being carried out at the Board's technological station in Halifax.