

THE CURRENT MANPOWER PICTURE

323,000 LOOKING FOR JOBS: The Minister of Labour, on January 28 issued the following statement on the employment situation:

A total of 323,000 persons were reported as looking for jobs through National Employment Service offices on January 12. The recent increase, which is for the most part a seasonal one, brings the total number of persons looking for work to some six per cent of the labour force.

This by no means indicates a general decline in the Canadian economy. Rather the increase in unemployment arises essentially from a number of special factors. Among these are the decline of woods employment, the re-appearance of sharper seasonal patterns of employment, and the abnormal weather conditions in some sections of the country. An additional factor has been the reduction in some of the unusually favourable market outlets which have existed during recent years. This reduction is due to readjustments of export trade and the disappearance of some domestic backlogs of demand.

HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR

Although unemployment this winter is higher than last year, a greater proportion of job seekers is covered by unemployment insurance than in recent years. Experience indicates that four out of every five workers who apply for benefits actually receive them. At the beginning of January, some 80 per cent of the registered job seekers were either claiming or receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Benefit payments amounted to over \$7 million in December and totalled almost \$70 million during all of 1949. To an increasing extent, unemployment insurance benefits and other social security measures are easing some of the burdens which temporary unemployment creates for individual workers.

The usual rapid increase in the number of those looking for work early in January is due in a large part to the situation in the logging industry. As cutting is completed, em-

ployment in the woods in eastern Canada begins to decline. Hauling the logs to the river banks in preparation for the spring drive requires much less manpower than cutting. This year, not only has the cutting season been shorter than usual, but also the lack of snow in many districts has delayed hauling. This has added to the troubles of many centres in lumber districts where unemployment is already heavy because of the generally lower level of cutting operations.

On the west coast, it is usual for logging to continue throughout the winter months. This year, however, violent storms have closed many of the camps. As a result, unemployed logging and sawmill workers have drifted into Vancouver, to swell the number of job seekers in that city.

DEMAND NOT VERY ACTIVE

In many sections of Canada, casual workers, not finding their usual winter work in logging, have come into the larger cities in search of jobs. These have not been easy to find. Although employment generally remains high, labour demand is not very active. Employers, with staffs more or less adequate to meet their production schedules, can afford to be selective in their hiring. Most job openings at the moment, therefore, are for skilled workers rather than for casual labour of the type employed in seasonal industries.

In other industries, the need for capacity production throughout the whole year has lessened as backlogs of demand have been filled. Thus, more seasonal layoffs are occurring. In addition, other workers have been laid off as the labour force shifted from industries where markets were softening to those where employment was expanding. Employment has declined in industries such as meat-packing, fur, lumber, non-ferrous metals, and certain sections of the iron and steel industry. These declines have been offset by gains in other industries, especially those producing consumer durable goods.

MR. ILSLEY CHIEF JUSTICE OF NOVA SCOTIA: The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent announced on January 26 that the following appointments had been approved:

J. J. Bowlen, Esq., of Calgary, as Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, effective February 1;

Vincent P. Burke, Esq., O.B.E., of St. John's, Newfoundland, to the Senate;

Rt. Hon. J.L. Ilsley as Chief Justice of Nova Scotia;

Mr. Justice George B. O'Connor of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Alberta as Chief Justice of Alberta;

Mr. Justice C.J. Ford of the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Alberta as a Judge of

the Appellate Division;

W.G. Egbert, Esq., K.C. of Calgary as a Judge of the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Alberta;

Alexander Bernier, Esq., K.C. of Winnipeg as a Judge of the County Courts, Central Division, Eastern Judicial District of Manitoba in place of Judge Joseph L.P. Roy, who has retired;

Reginald D. Keirstead, Esq., of Saint John, N.B. as a Judge of the County Court for the County of Saint John, New Brunswick;

Dr. André Simard of the city of Quebec as a Commissioner of the National Battlefields Commission.