

EMPLOYMENT PICTURE: Employment in non-manufacturing industries expanded at approximately the usual rate for July, but slightly less than is usual in manufacturing. Reflecting these trends, the number of persons with jobs increased by more than 100,000 during the four weeks ending July 24, moderately less than during the comparable period last year.

Many more workers were affected by vacation closures this year than a year ago. As a result, it is estimated that about 450,000 were out on vacations at the end of July this year, compared with less than 300,000 in 1953. Unemployment declined considerably more during the month than in July last year, although it continued to be significantly higher.

Employment in the forestry, lumbering, and construction industries increased slightly more than is usual for the month; it increased less than usual in the tourist trade and in such outdoor activities as haying. Employment in the trade and services sectors increased as usual.

Manufacturing employment showed mixed trends; industries such as pulp and paper, wood products, and electrical apparatus showed increased labour requirements while transportation equipment manufacturing, especially the vehicle and vehicle supply firms, and the iron and steel industry showed reduced requirements, which in some cases were of a temporary nature.

The civilian labour force totalled 5,556,000 in the week ended July 24, 1954, compared with 5,462,000 in the week ended June 19, 1954. These estimates are obtained from the monthly labour force survey conducted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

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FEWER STRIKES: There was a sharp drop in the amount of time lost from work stoppages arising from industrial disputes in Canada during July, according to a preliminary summary of strikes and lockouts released August 25 by the Minister of Labour. Preliminary figures for July showed 29 work stoppages in existence, involving 6,607 workers and a time loss of 54,111 man-working days, as compared with 31 stoppages in June 1954, involving 107,157 workers and a time loss of 86,085 days. In July 1953, there were 7,399 workers involved in 32 strikes and lockouts with a time loss of 73,898 days.

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POWER PRODUCTION UP: Power production by central electric stations increased in June to 5,674,937,000 kilowatt hours as compared to 5,264,516,000 in June last year, production being higher than last year in all provinces. The June advance raised the cumulative total for the first time this year over that for 1953, bringing it to 33,808,216,000 as against 33,454,253,000 kilowatt hours. Output in the six months was higher than in 1953 in all provinces except Quebec.

NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY: Estimated gross production of natural gas, less field waste, was 101,500,766 M cu. Ft. in 1953, 14 per cent higher than 1952, the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys has announced. Alberta supplied 88 per cent of the 1953 production, the remainder coming from Ontario, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Northwest Territories. Although large reserves have been developed in northeastern British Columbia, market outlets are not yet available.

The most important developments in the natural gas industry in Canada during 1953 related to the proposed export of Alberta natural gas to central Canada.

There has been no production in British Columbia as yet. Reserves of natural gas are, however, being built up in anticipation of a market outlet to the Pacific coast. The main centre of exploration is the Peace River district where exploratory projects were designed primarily to expand and evaluate the large Fort St. John gas field and surrounding areas. At the end of the year 31,426,352 acres were held under permit, license, and lease. Eighteen wells were completed as potential gas wells; 18 wells were abandoned; total footage drilled was 196,227 feet; and at the height of drilling activity, in June and July, 15 rigs were operating. Eight of these were in use at the end of the year.

Reserves of natural gas, in situ, in the Peace River district of British Columbia are in excess of 2,000,000,000 M cu. ft. with a further 1,500,000,000 M cu. ft. in the Alberta part of the Peace River region.

In Alberta, natural gas has been discovered in almost every area in which drilling for oil has been carried out, the present large reserves being mainly the result of the extensive search for oil. At the end of 1953, there were 405 gas wells capable of being operated and of these 272 were in production. These totals exclude wells classified as crude oil wells from which almost two-thirds of current production is coming.

A reserve study made during the year by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Conservation Board of Alberta showed that marketable reserves of Alberta natural gas as of June 30, 1953 were 11,500,000,000 M cu. ft. As a result of this finding, 3,500,000,000 M cu. ft. was made available for export to central Canada. The Board anticipates an increase in reserves of 1,250,000,000 M to 1,500,000,000 M cu. ft. each year during the next 10 years which would also be available for export.

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Pulp and paper is Canada's biggest manufacturing industry from the standpoint of factory value of shipments, which totalled \$1,158,000,000 in 1952. Slaughtering and meatpacking followed with \$864,000,000, and non-ferrous smelting and refining was a close third with \$837,000,000.