

CANADIAN LABOUR FORCE:

Employment declined less than seasonally for the third successive month. The December employment estimate was 180,000, or 3 per cent higher than a year earlier. The increase in unemployment during the month was relatively small, and the December unemployment estimate was down 115,000 over the year.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment decreased by 73,000 during November and December, a small decline for this time of year. Layoffs in construction were relatively light, owing to a recent strengthening in non-residential building and the continued high level of housebuilding. The remaining layoffs during the month were mainly in manufacturing and agriculture. Hiring for temporary work in trade and service in preparation for the holiday season provided some offset to these decreases.

Employment has strengthened steadily since early 1961, and the level in December was 3 per cent higher than a year earlier. Percentage increases in the numbers of men and women employed were about equal.

The recovery in manufacturing activity was an important factor in the relatively strong employment demand. Factory employment in the fourth quarter was 6 per cent higher than a year earlier. Expansion in service was maintained, employment increasing by 4 per cent. Changes in other industries had little effect on the total.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The increase in unemployment in November and December, and in fact since the seasonal low in September, was the smallest in five years. An estimated 413,000 were unemployed in December, 64,000 more than in November but 115,000 fewer than in December 1960. The current figure represents 6.4 per cent of the labour force, the lowest December unemployment rate since 1956.

Nearly the whole year-to-year decrease in unemployment was among men. Some 355,000 men were unemployed in December, 110,000 fewer than in the same month a year earlier. The number of unemployed women, estimated at 58,000, was slightly lower than in December 1960.

Of the 413,000 unemployed in December, 74 per cent were unemployed for three months or less, 12 per cent for four to six months, and 14 per cent for over six months. The decrease in unemployment over the year was among those unemployed for six months or less.

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CANADA BUYS "JET-STAR"

The first Canadian-owned "Jet-Star" a utility jet aircraft with a speed of 540 m.p.h., will soon be flown to Canada by Department of Transport pilots. J.D. Hunter, Superintendent of Flight Operations, recently took delivery of the four-engined plane from the Lockheed-Georgia Company at Marietta, Georgia, U.S.A.

The aircraft was obtained to help the Department keep pace with modern high-altitude, high-speed equipment. It will be used to evaluate navigational radio aids at high altitudes and to set traffic-control procedure for airline and military jet traffic. Its performance and capabilities enable it to duplicate the flight characteristics of the newest and fastest jetliners.

CREW TRAINING

Transport Department flight crews and mechanics have been training on the "Jet-Star" at Marietta for several weeks. After delivery, it will be necessary to extend the training of various specialists in the operation and maintenance of the aircraft during a further "shakedown" period.

The "Jet-Star" is powered by four JT-12 engines developed initially by Canadian Pratt and Whitney. The engines, mounted at the rear of the plane, have a thrust of 3,000 pounds each. The aircraft has a range of more than 2,300 miles and flies at altitudes up to 43,000 feet. Comparable in size to the "Lodestar", the "Jet-Star" is 60 feet long, 20 feet high and has a wing-span of 54 feet.

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NEW TRADE SERVICES BRANCH

Mr. George Hees, Minister of Trade and Commerce, recently announced the formation of a Trade Services Branch, the purpose of which would be to provide for the separate administration of various trade-supporting services previously handled in other branches of the Department. He described this move as a step to streamline the organization.

The new branch will:

- (a) Undertake studies of the structure of freight tariffs, established by the various ocean-shipping conferences and other carriers, and their influence on Canadian exports. It will also follow developments in the transportation industry relating to "containerization" and packaging.
- (b) Participate in the Canadian Port Committee and the Committee on Pacific Coast Transportation.
- (c) Administer the regional offices of the Department, and maintain through these offices close liaison with the provincial departments of trade and industry, with manufacturers and other commercial interests.
- (d) Administer the Export & Import Permits Act, and provide firms seeking related information with rapid service. It will also participate in international conferences on export-control matters and strategic-control policy, as this affects changes to the International Strategic Control lists.
- (e) Maintain liaison with the Canadian Maritime Commission, the National Harbours Board, the Department of Transport, the Air Transport Board and the Board of Transport Commissioners.
- (f) Maintain the Department's confidential trade directories, for use by trade commissioners abroad.