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THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICE OF CANADA

The experience of a decade and a half, during a portion of which the nation was involved in a world war, has demonstrated the value of Canada's National Employment Service. This country-wide organization, which is administered by the Unemployment Insurance Commission as one of its main branches, has achieved an assured position in the national economy. More and more employers are turning to it for their employee requirements. Unemployed workers are learning the value of a system that spans the nation and is based on familiarity with the entire employment field.

The Unemployment Insurance Act, which provides the statutory basis for the National Employment Service, was passed by Parliament in the summer of 1940. Its introduction followed an amendment to Canada's constitution that gave the Federal Government jurisdiction in the field of unemployment insurance. This provided the Government with the power necessary to establish a national employment service which is essential to the operation of an adequate programme of unemployment insurance.

The new organization started operating at the peak of the Second World War. The doors of Commission offices across Canada were opened to the public in the summer of 1941. The start was made in the main cities and towns; but in a comparatively short time, local offices were functioning in a majority of urban centres of any size.

The National Employment Service is not, however, Canada's first venture into the field of public employment. Late in the First World War, Parliament passed legislation under which the Government paid subsidies to provinces organizing and operating public employment services. Eight of the provincial governments entered into agreements with the Federal Government covering the operation of public employment offices. As a result a chain of offices called the "Employment Service of Canada" eventually functioned across Canada. This network included approximately 75 urban centres, in all provinces with the exception of Prince Edward Island.

Thus, when the Unemployment Insurance Act was passed, an employment service which embraced eight of the nine provinces then forming Canada was in existence. The provinces were notified that, with the coming into effect of the new law, federal aid to the Employment Service of Canada would terminate. Negotiations were undertaken with the provincial governments with a view to their withdrawal from the field of public employment service administration. As a result, the governments

of the provinces nearly all withdrew from this field. The Province of Quebec continued operation of some provincial employment offices but with very little duplication of the federal service.

As already stated, the Unemployment Insurance Commission administers the National Employment Service as a part of its unemployment insurance program. It will readily be seen that, when an unemployed person enters one of the Commission offices, the primary object of the organization is to provide him or her with suitable employment. The average worker wants a job. If it is impossible to find suitable employment for him and if he is engaged in insurable employment, then he becomes an applicant for unemployment insurance benefits. Consequently, it will be seen that the employment and insurance branches of the Commission must work in the closest association and complement each other's activities.

The Canadian unemployment insurance program is a co-operative undertaking. The unemployment insurance fund is created by contributions made by employers and workers on what is practically an even basis. From the public treasury a further contribution is made. This amounts to about one-fifth of the total amount contributed by employers and employees.

Recognizing the fact that employers and workers were called upon by the legislation to build up this fund, Parliament decided that unemployment insurance should be administered by a Commission which would be representative of both employer and worker organizations. Thus, in drafting the legislation, provision was made for the creation of a Commission of three. One member represents employers, another employees, while the third represents the nation as a whole.

The Act also carried out this principle in connection with the appointment of advisory committees. Provision was made for the establishment of national, regional and local committees to advise on matters connected with employment. The National Employment Committee is made up of representatives of employer and employee organizations. Women's organizations, agriculture, the retail trade and veterans also have representation. The Committee meets three times a year and deals with problems that have arisen or considers matters referred to it by the Commission or arising from meetings of local or regional committees. These regional and local committees are, like the National Committee, made up of representatives of the various organizations referred to, and function in their special fields. The Commission has divided Canada for administrative purposes, into five regions, in each of which a regional employment committee functions. Local employment committees, of which there are now 62, advise local office managers on matters arising in their fields.

In addition, approximately 100 ad hoc committees have been organized in localities where no regular local employment committee exists. These ad hoc committees were formed for the specific purpose of initiating and conducting winter employment campaigns in their own communities. The local campaigns supplement the national effort to spread economic activity more evenly over the whole year and thus reduce the number of workers who become unemployed during the winter months.

The basic principle on which the National Employment Service has proceeded since its establishment is set forth in a statement of policy adopted by the Unemployment Insurance Commission before the first local office began to function. This statement describes the aim as being: (a) to refer to suitable employment any employable resident of Canada, either male or female, of whatever occupation or calling; (b) to secure suitable applicants to fill any vacancy reported by an employer; (c) in a general way to assist wherever possible in alleviating an unemployment situation or in suggesting means for its alleviation.

It will be seen, therefore, that the main object in the employment field has been to provide a placement service technically and physically equipped to cope with employment problems. This service must be such as to provide adequate facilities for satisfying the requirements both of employer and employee. It must be courteous and efficient and capable of enlisting their active support and patronage. It must also provide special facilities to meet the needs of special categories of workers where the problem of placement varies from the normal.

The head office of the Unemployment Insurance Commission, of which the National Employment Service is a branch, is located in Ottawa. Here the Commission has built up a central organization responsible for the planning and general direction of the organization as a whole. An Executive Director is the senior officer under the Commission and the line of authority extends from him through the five regional superintendents to the local offices of the Commission, which now number 200. Regional offices located at Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver supervise local-office administration and affairs generally in their respective regions. They are, of course, responsible to the head office.

The five administration areas are the Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairie and Pacific regions. The Atlantic region includes Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Province of Quebec is the Quebec region. All of Ontario east of a line drawn north near the head of the Lakes constitutes the Ontario region. The Prairie region consists of the remainder of Ontario, the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Peace River District. The remainder of British Columbia is comprised in the Pacific region.

In considering this organization the importance of the local office will immediately be noted. In fact the success or failure of an employment service system depends largely on the local employment office, the point at which the service meets the public. In the local office, the Commission's organization is in direct contact with both employers and workers. Consequently every effort is made to ensure that these offices are adequately staffed and provide efficient service.

Employment offices are established wherever the population and economic conditions create the need. They are graded as to size according to the nature of the local economy. The smaller or lower-graded offices usually serve areas predominantly rural and with small urban populations. The larger and higher-graded offices usually serve areas which are urban and industrial. Other offices vary in grade between the two extremes.

The functions of a local office involve registration of all persons who apply for employment. The method of registration varies with circumstances. It may be oral, self-registration, group registration, or registration by mail. Good relations must be maintained with employer and employees groups. From employers the local office receives order for workers, endeavours to fill them and follows up the matter until placements are effected or orders cancelled. Files of applications for employment and requests for workers are kept, and every effort is made to send employers workers with the qualifications best suited for the employment available. When suitable workers are not available locally, a local office may clear such orders to other offices where suitable workers may be available. Thus, if necessary, a local office can enlist the help of the entire organization in finding suitable workers.

The clearance system is one of the most valuable features of the National Employment Service. It could only exist on a country-wide basis in a national organization. It means that an employer in any part of Canada who has difficulty in obtaining certain types of workers in his own locality has the entire employment resources of the service from coast to coast at his command. Similarly the field of opportunities for workers is nation-wide. In certain cases the Unemployment Insurance Commission is authorized to advance transportation on behalf of employers to workers at a distance.

The value of the National Employment Service in meeting seasonal demands in various parts of the country will be appreciated. In co-operation with provincial governments, the National Employment Service organizes regular seasonal movements of workers in agriculture. Special transportation arrangements are made under which these workers are able to move at relatively small cost from one part of the country to the other as the need for their services arises. Movements of harvesters and others have proven of very great value in gathering the various crops in different parts of Canada.

The Commission has played an important part, through its National Employment Service, in the successful settlement of newly arrived immigrants. Frequently, when the immigrant reaches Canada, his most pressing need is employment. He usually knows very little about how to obtain employment in Canada. Consequently he has to be assisted by the National Employment Service in finding the work for which he has been designated or to which he is suited. In co-operation with the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, the National Employment Service has been able to place large numbers of immigrants from Europe and elsewhere.

Some mention should be made of insurance, the other important branch of the Commission's organization. As already stated employers and workers in insurable employments contribute to a fund which now has a reserve of more than \$830,000,000. Insurance contributions are collected in different ways, the commonest being that of giving each insured worker a book in which his contributions are recorded by stamps purchased by the employer. If an insured worker loses his employment and cannot be provided with suitable employment by his local office, he makes a claim for benefit. His claim is investigated and, if he can qualify, the amount to which he is entitled is paid to him over the period of entitlement.

As the National Employment Service developed, it became evident that certain groups of workers would require special services. Consequently services were gradually developed to assist in the placement of the handicapped, the

older worker, the young boy or girl just entering the employment field, individuals in the executive and professional classes, etc. It has been found that special-placements services can be of the greatest assistance in obtaining work for persons with physical or mental handicaps. Not only have these services succeeded in placing many handicapped persons in suitable employment but they have also convinced a large number of employers that handicapped persons, given proper working conditions, can be valuable producers. Many employers are now prepared to engage a handicapped worker, since they know that under favourable conditions he can produce as well as or even better than, a normal person.

The National Employment Service provides special counselling facilities both for older and younger persons. It is recognized that the first job is of very great importance to a boy or girl. If he or she can be successfully placed at first, a great deal of disappointment and disillusionment may be avoided. As for the older worker, careful and sympathetic counselling through re-establishing his morale frequently results in his being able to obtain employment.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future of the National Employment Service, However, since it has now functioned successfully under conditions of war and of peace and in view of its growth in the public estimation and of the increased use of its facilities by both workers and employers, this service seems certain to develop and expand still further with the growth of Canada.

Regional offices of the Unemployment Insurance Commission are located at the following addresses:-

MONCTON, N.B.	-	1005 Main Street
MONTREAL, P.Q.	-	1441 St. Urbain Street
TORONTO, Ont.	-	25 St. Clair Avenue, E.
WINNIPEG, Man.	-	266 Graham Street
VANCOUVER, B.C.	-	1155 Robson Street

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 tions, can be valuable producers. Any employer who is not
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 under favorable conditions in the work place, will be
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The National Employment Service provides special
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 is recognized that the first job is of very great importance to
 a boy or girl. It is of the same importance to a woman
 as a first job of a man. It is of the same importance to a
 man as a first job of a woman. As for the other workers, special
 counseling through government agencies is available. It is
 possible in this connection to obtain special help.

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 importance of the facilities of both workers and employers,
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 with the growth of Canada.

Regional offices of the National Employment Service
 are located at the following addresses:-

- 1000 Main Street - MONCTON, N.B.
- 1001 St. Charles Street - MONTREAL, P.Q.
- 25 St. John Avenue W. - TORONTO, Ont.
- 250 Bloor Street - WILKINSON, Man.
- 115 Robson Street - VANCOUVER, B.C.