

Subsection 2.—Special Legislation Relating to Reconstruction

Agriculture and Fisheries.—The Agricultural Prices Support Act of 1944 established a Board under the Minister of Agriculture with power to determine prices for agricultural products, to pay subsidies where necessary, to purchase agricultural products for government purposes, and to appoint committees of inquiry as they may be required. The Fisheries Prices Support Act of 1944 established a similar body for the fishing industry.

Housing.—The National Housing Act of 1944 was passed to stimulate investment in construction, to provide assistance to persons desiring to build their own homes and to provide loans for private corporations for the construction of low-rent housing projects. It is administered by the Minister of Finance and covers both rural and urban housing. The Act also gives the Minister power to make plans for slum clearance and to underwrite loans for home improvement or extension. (See pp. 445-446.)

Export Credits.—The Government passed in 1944 the Export Credits Insurance Act under which the Minister of Trade and Commerce acting through an Export Credits Insurance Corporation may make contracts of insurance with an exporter for the purpose of developing foreign trade. It also empowers the Government to guarantee obligations assumed by a country other than Canada or its agency to buy foreign securities and to make loans to other governments in order to assist them to purchase Canadian goods. (See p. 482.)

Loans for Industrial and Farm Development.—An Industrial Development Bank was established in 1944 to provide financial assistance to deserving enterprises, especially small enterprises which find it difficult or impossible to obtain the necessary credits through existing financial institutions. Similarly, assistance to farmers has been provided by the Farm Improvements Loan Act.

Employment.—The problem of employment during the War has been given particularly careful study by the Government Departments concerned. Important experience has been gained in the placement and training of workers. Under the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1940, the Employment Offices and Placement Service was established and since 1942 has administered the National Selective Service Program under the Minister of Labour. It is intended to relax restrictive regulations as soon as they no longer serve a useful purpose but the placement service will be retained and expanded in order to provide a smooth transition from wartime to peacetime employment both for veterans and persons displaced from war industry. In so far as veterans' problems are concerned, the Department of Labour works in close co-operation with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Vocational training facilities have been improved and extended throughout Canada during the war years. In 1942 the Vocational Education Co-ordination Act authorized the expenditure of \$20,000,000 over a period of ten years. It is intended to provide effective training to fit men and women for productive roles in a modern industrial system. The Armed Forces co-operate in these plans by their system of personnel selection in which individual attention is given to each person discharged from the service in order to provide the Department of Labour with an accurate and complete picture of his ability, experience and preferences.