

similar legislation by Provincial Governments. Before the Bill was introduced in Parliament, several provinces had passed legislation incorporating many of the provisions of P.C. 1003, 1944.

The Federal and Provincial Governments have co-operated in providing industrial and other forms of vocational training for war veterans and young people and for the retraining of workers released from war employment. The National Employment Service has also undertaken to place executive and professional personnel. In 1946, the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act were extended to cover merchant seamen. Working conditions have continued to improve during the post-war period. The volume of unemployment has been relatively low, wages have continued to rise, and the hours of labour have been shortened from their wartime level. (See also Chapter XX on Labour.)

Consumers.—The high level of employment and income prevailing during the war years declined only moderately in the first post-war year and levelled out far above the pre-war level. As a comparable increase in prices had not occurred between the pre-war and post-war years, the general standard of living of the people was substantially higher than before the War. In general, the supply of consumer goods held its own or increased in the first year after the War in spite of supply bottlenecks and industrial unrest. As the year ended, the supply situation in regard to consumer goods started to improve noticeably. As a protection for consumers, articles in very short supply were kept under rationing following the War and price controls were also retained where it appeared desirable in situations of possible rapid and disturbing rise in prices. The price level has continued to rise since the end of the War and was accelerated to some extent in the early part of 1947 when large numbers of price ceilings and subsidies were dropped. Wartime restriction on instalment buying was relaxed in 1946.

Housing.—Throughout the post-war period, the Federal Government has sponsored a large-scale residential building program to meet the critical housing needs of Canadian citizens. Financial assistance is provided under the National Housing Act, 1944; the Veterans' Land Act, 1942; the Canadian Farm Loan Act, 1927; the Farm Improvement Loans Act, 1944; and the Emergency Shelter Provisions. The principal agency for the handling of this assistance is the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This building program is dealt with in detail in Chapter XIX on Construction.

Because of the shortage of many types of building materials, the Federal Government has found it advisable to provide assistance and guidance in the production of these materials and in the use of new methods and materials for certain types of housing (see p. 303-304). Provision was made early in 1947 whereby rental projects acquired or brought under construction between Mar. 31, 1947, and Dec. 31, 1949, if approved by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, would be permitted double depreciation for income tax purposes and the opportunity to amortize their loans from the Housing Corporation over a period of 30 years. (See also p. 584-587.)

In view of an anticipated shortage of qualified building-trades workmen, the Federal Government entered into a ten-year agreement with the provinces in 1944, whereby it provided a sum of approximately \$1,000,000 to assist the provinces in expanding training facilities. At the end of 1945, 3,800 persons were receiving training in the building trades, at the end of 1946 the number had increased to 7,500, and at Mar. 31, 1947, it was 8,150. A large proportion of these trainees are veterans.