

to December. The clothing industry, strongly influenced by fashion and seasonal requirements, has high points in the spring and the autumn; the demand for agricultural implements is highest in spring and summer.

The total adverse effect of regularly recurring temporary unemployment is impossible to assess. The most serious factor is the waste of manpower involved. Man-hours not used can never be regained. It is estimated that there are 250,000 Canadians seasonally unemployed each winter even in years of generally high employment, but if the economy slows a little the number increases and the loss in man-hours and wages is that much greater.

Another factor to consider is the annual cost of maintaining seasonally unemployed workers. Employers and employees jointly bear most of the cost of unemployment insurance benefits, both regular and supplementary; the Government contributes one-fifth of their total contribution and bears the administrative costs. During the period January to April 1955 the Unemployment Insurance Commission paid out more than \$142,000,000 in unemployment insurance benefits, of which about \$29,000,000 were supplementary payments. Supplementary benefits are paid to certain classes whose benefits have been exhausted or who are not entitled to ordinary benefit during the period Jan. 1 to Apr. 15 each year.

The cost of maintaining those seasonally unemployed not covered by unemployment insurance or supplementary payments falls on public relief funds, charitable organizations, churches and private persons. In addition to such direct assistance there are the intangible personal and social costs which are associated with unemployment, whatever its cause.

Of course not all workers holding seasonal jobs are unemployed for an extended period. This becomes clear when the different groups of people engaged in seasonal work are considered. One group consists mostly of students, housewives, retired people and others who enter the labour force at peak periods but withdraw when their jobs come to an end or school reopens. Another group includes those workers who transfer from one industry to another—for example from farming to logging—as the seasons change. Some shifts are also made by workers from one area to another within the same industry. A third group includes those who work for only a part of the year but who are looking for work for the balance of the year. These are the seasonally unemployed, but they constitute only a portion of the total number of workers affected by seasonality of employment.

SEASONALITY AMONG THE INDUSTRIES

The degree of seasonality varies considerably from industry to industry. The following statement shows the amplitudes of seasonal variations for all non-agricultural industrial groups, together with the months of peak and trough employment, the approximate number of seasonal employees, and the average peak number of employees. The figures quoted are all averages for the years 1947-51. The "amplitude of seasonal employment variations" is defined as the average difference between peak and trough employment when both are expressed as percentages of average employment. The greater the amplitude, the greater the proportion of seasonal employees. Because the data are derived from establishments usually employing 15 or more persons and small firms are omitted, the figures for seasonal employees and average employment are on the conservative side.