

low. The gain in mining production was much more pronounced, partly as a result of industrial disputes late in 1958. Forestry production was also higher. In general, production in the service-producing industries continued to rise during the recession and expanded further in the first half of 1959.

Comparing the first half of 1959 with the same period of 1958, real output as a whole was about 5 p.c. higher, with the goods-producing and the service-producing sectors showing about the same rate of advance. Construction was the only industry with a lower output. Employment showed greater than seasonal strength in the opening months of the year and by June the number of persons with jobs, 6,053,000, was at an all-time high, and 174,000 more than a year earlier. The number of persons without jobs had fallen more than seasonally and in June represented 4.6 p.c. of the labour force, compared with 7.2 p.c. a year earlier. The number of persons with jobs in the first six months of 1959 was nearly 2.5 p.c. higher than in the same period of 1958. Thus the expansion in employment continued to fall short of the growth in output.

The industrial composite index of employment and its manufacturing component rose 2 p.c. in the first six months of the year on a seasonally adjusted basis. The greater part of the non-seasonal expansion in employment opportunities in manufacturing was in the durable goods industries, despite the large-scale lay-offs in the aircraft industry that followed the cancellation of contracts in February. Although there was general improvement in the employment situation, the composite index in June was still appreciably below the peak reached two years earlier.

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