

**Subsection 2.—Provincial Labour Legislation**

Because of the authority given by the British North America Act to the provincial legislatures to make laws in relation to local works and undertakings and in relation to property and civil rights in the province, power to enact labour legislation is largely the prerogative of the provinces. Since it imposes conditions on the rights of the employer and employee to enter into a contract of employment, labour legislation is, generally speaking, law in relation to civil rights. Under this authority, the provincial legislatures have enacted a large body of legislation affecting the employment relationship in such fields as working hours, minimum wages, the physical conditions of workplaces, apprenticeship and training, wage payment and wage collection, labour-management relations, workmen's compensation and other matters. In each province a Department of Labour is charged with the administration of labour laws. Legislation for the protection of miners is administered by departments dealing with mines. The workmen's compensation law in each province is administered by a Workmen's Compensation Board appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

As a means of ensuring adequate living standards for workers, all provinces have enacted minimum wage legislation. These laws vest in a minimum-wage-fixing board authority to set minimum wages for employees. Five provinces have general hours-of-work laws, which either limit daily and weekly working hours or require the payment of an overtime rate if work is continued beyond specified daily and weekly hours.

Hours of work are also restricted and minimum wages established for certain types of employment under industrial standards legislation in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta, under the Manitoba Construction Industry Wages Act and under the Quebec Collective Agreement Act (see p. 726).

Eight provinces have passed annual vacations laws (see pp. 723-724) and in most provinces there is legislation setting a minimum age for the employment of young workers in various industries and occupations. A weekly day of rest is provided for by law in most provinces. In two provinces there are statutory requirements regarding the observance of certain public holidays.

Factory or industrial safety Acts in most provinces establish safeguards for the protection of the health and safety of workers in factories and other workplaces with respect to such matters as sanitation, heating, lighting, ventilation and the guarding of dangerous machinery. Long-established laws regulating the design, construction, installation and operation of mechanical equipment such as boilers and pressure vessels, elevators and lifts and electrical installations, have been revised in recent years in line with technological changes, and legal standards have been set in new fields involving hazards to workers and the public, such as the use of gas- and oil-burning equipment. This legislation also prescribes standards of qualification for workers who install, operate or service such equipment. Laws requiring measures to be taken to eliminate accidents in construction and excavation work are in force in a number of jurisdictions.

All provinces have apprenticeship laws providing for an organized procedure of on-the-job training and school instruction in designated skilled trades, and statutory provision is made in most provinces for the issue of certificates of qualification, on application, to qualified tradesmen in certain trades. In some provinces legislation is in effect making it mandatory for certain classes of tradesmen to hold a certificate of competency.

In all provinces there is legislation similar in principle to the federal Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, designed to establish equitable relations between employers and employees and to facilitate the settlement of industrial disputes. These laws guarantee freedom of association and the right to organize, establish machinery (labour relations boards) for the certification of a trade union as the exclusive bargaining agent of an appropriate unit of employees, and make compulsory collective bargaining between an employer and the certified trade union representing his employees. Except in Saskatchewan, they provide for compulsory conciliation, that is, they require the parties to