

Chapter 8

Labour

8.1 The government in relation to labour

8.1.1 Canada Department of Labour

Established in 1900 under the Conciliation Act, which involved the federal government in preventing and settling labour disputes, the Canada Department of Labour was formed to investigate important industrial questions and to collect, analyze and publish statistical and other information related to Canadian labour conditions. It also administered the Fair Wages Policy, adopted in the same year to protect people employed on federal government contracts and on projects supported by public funds. The Department's work focused on two areas, industrial relations and manpower supply, until January 1, 1966 when all manpower activities were transferred to the Department of Manpower and Immigration.

The industrial relations legislation now administered by the Canada Department of Labour applies to employers, employees and trade unions within federal jurisdiction. The Department is responsible for conciliation procedures in industrial disputes, investigating complaints of unfair labour practices, refusals to bargain and violations of legislation, processing trade union applications for certification and decertification and conducting representation votes. It determines wage rates and hours of work as far as federal government contracts for construction or supplies are concerned, and promotes improved industrial relations through joint union-management consultation and by preventive mediation through industry specialists. The Department is also responsible for administering assistance granted under the Automotive Manufacturing Assistance Regulations and the Adjustment Assistance Benefits Program for displaced workers in the textile and clothing industries.

Much of the legislation regulating employment practices, labour standards, safety and industrial regulations was integrated in the Canada Labour Code which came into force on July 15, 1971. It is discussed later in this chapter.

The Department's over-all objective is to achieve economic and social progress by establishing a climate of good industrial relations promoted through three main programs: the Industrial Relations program encompassing the Conciliation and Arbitration Branch, the Employee Representation Branch, the Fair Employment Practices Branch and the Labour-Management Consultation Branch; the Employment Standards program covering the Labour Standards Branch, the Accident Prevention and Compensation Branch and the Women's Bureau; the Research and Development program comprising the Economics and Research Branch, the International Labour Affairs Branch, the Legislative Research Branch and Library Services.

The Department maintains records of labour legislation in the provinces and in other countries and provides liaison between the International Labour Organization and the federal and provincial governments. As part of a broad publication program it publishes the monthly *Labour Gazette*.

8.1.2 Department of Manpower and Immigration

The Department of Manpower and Immigration recruits and develops manpower resources in line with the needs of the economy. Two main sources are used to supply the labour market: counselling and, where necessary, training and relocation to employ domestic workers; and introduction of new manpower through immigration.

Operations Canada distinguishes the Department's domestic field activities from those at head office and at offices abroad; it comprises five regional headquarters, some 390 Canada Manpower Centres and 95 Immigration Centres in Canada. Regional directors-general, responsible for both manpower and immigration activities in the field, report to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations, at head office. The objectives of Operations Canada are: to provide an effective employment service for both workers and employers through strategically located Canada Manpower Centres, to help workers attain their full potential through counselling or referral to skill development and upgrading programs; to assist employers in recruiting skilled workers and in long-range manpower planning by providing up-to-date