

establish new businesses. A product development program assists manufacturers to develop new products or improve goods already in production.

Industries can receive help through a management development program which offers grants up to 50% of management consultant fees and provides financial help to industrial managers to attend approved courses. The department also organizes and finances management seminars and assigns industrial consultants to advise potential investors. A Saskatchewan mainstreet development program supplies consultant services and grants to help with storefront renovations in central business districts of small communities. General counselling to business people is provided through nine regional offices and two urban offices. During 1978, about 3,300 inquiries were handled and more than 1,100 businesses received assistance.

An employment opportunities program for disadvantaged persons and a special ARDA program under the Agricultural and Rural Development Act help to create employment for people of Indian ancestry. They provided 184 jobs in 60 projects in 1978.

An aid to trade program is designed to help individual manufacturers or producers to introduce new products to the marketplace or to cultivate new markets for existing products. This program provides cost sharing for a variety of activities including trade fairs, trade missions, market research, product promotion, a program for incoming buyers and sample shipments.

The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corp. (SEDCO), a Crown corporation, shares costs with communities developing industrial parks and providing infrastructure for new industrial development. SEDCO financing includes mortgage loans of up to 20 years, short-term loans; leaseback or rental arrangements on industrial sites, buildings and equipment; share capital participation and financing; and guarantees on loans with conventional lending sources. SEDCO is a major source of venture capital and can develop an individual financial package for each project proposal.

Financing is also available through a small industry development program administered by the Saskatchewan industry and commerce department. Forgivable loans are offered for projects costing less than \$100,000. Manufacturing and processing companies planning to expand, modernize or establish a new facility in the province are eligible to receive loans.

Operation Recycle removes discarded vehicles from the Saskatchewan countryside and salvages the metal they contain, transporting it to the Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Co. in Regina for reprocessing.

A Saskatchewan handcraft festival, sponsored by the department, is held each year in the town of Battleford. In 1978 records were set in both attendance and sales. An estimated 15,000 people bought or placed orders for \$84,000 worth of products.

Alberta

18.5.9

The Alberta Opportunity Co. (AOC), a Crown agency, promotes economic growth by stimulating new businesses and aiding existing enterprises. AOC gives priority to Albertans and Alberta-owned enterprises, small businesses and centres of small population.

To qualify for assistance, a business may be a proprietorship, partnership, co-operative or corporate body, must operate for gain or profit, must be in Alberta and must provide assurance that any aid given will be used exclusively in Alberta. Eligible businesses include manufacturing, processing and assembly operations, service industries, commercial wholesale and retail trade, recreational facilities, tourist establishments, local development organizations, student business enterprises and new industries which are unique and valuable additions to the province. The program is not designed for finance companies, suppliers of residential accommodation other than tourist facilities, public utilities including power generation and distribution, or resource-based industries such as mining and oil and gas production.

Assistance may provide for establishing new businesses, acquiring fixed assets — land, buildings and equipment — expanding existing facilities, strengthening working