

Certain industries, although they have large seasonal variations, do not contribute proportionately to seasonal unemployment because their seasonal workers consist largely of students, housewives or other persons who do not in general want year-round jobs. Industries in this group are retail trade, hotels and restaurants, canned and preserved fruits and vegetables, some parts of non-metal mining and some parts of tobacco and tobacco products. On the other hand some industries are so strongly affected by climatic changes that they are virtually unable to conduct their normal activities during the winter months. These include water transportation, construction of highways and streets and, to a lesser extent, shipbuilding and repairing, and grain elevators.

The forest industries—logging, sawmills, and pulp and paper mills—are in a unique position. Employers very often conduct operations in two or in all three of these branches which means that at least a part of their work force can be transferred regularly from logging to mill work or vice versa. In fact seasonal employment variations in sawmills and pulp and paper mills do not present as serious an employment problem as in most other industries because many of the workers seasonally laid off are absorbed in logging in the winter months. And although logging employs a much larger seasonal labour force than sawmills and pulp and paper mills the difference is largely composed of farmers and fishermen who return to these occupations when the logging season is over.

Some industries are affected by seasonal variations in their supply of raw materials or in the demand for their products, or a combination of the two. It is in these industries in particular that constructive action to reduce seasonal variations on the part of employers, unions and consumers may be most effective. The category includes planing mills, meat and dairy products, canned and cured fish, carbonated beverages, women's clothing and agricultural implements.

The building construction industry, of special significance because it accounts for a large part of the seasonally unemployed in Canada, is one in which co-operative planning for the reduction of seasonal employment is particularly important. With regard to this industry however the public must be educated to accept the fact that construction work can be done during the winter—a season traditionally considered impracticable for such activity.

STABILIZATION MEASURES

Many effective steps may be taken to stabilize employment, particularly in the industries falling in the last two groups mentioned above. These include diversification of products, stockpiling of raw materials and finished goods, the levelling of seasonal consumer spending habits, the scheduling of repairs and alterations in the offseason, the transfer of employees between departments of the business, the training of workers for jobs that are available at different seasons and the taking of holidays in the slack season.

However the measures that may be taken to reduce seasonal employment vary considerably from industry to industry. The problem as it exists for three of Canada's most seasonal industries—water transportation, women's clothing and building construction—is examined here as an indication of that variability.

In the *water transportation industry* climatic conditions are the most important cause of seasonal unemployment but coastal navigation is much less affected than inland water transportation. On the Atlantic Coast the ports do more business when the St. Lawrence River is closed, although some do much larger coastal and overseas trade than others. On the Pacific Coast, where there is no competing inland waterway, the water transportation business is more stable. Companies operating on the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River however are forced to shut down for several months each year because of ice and storms. Employment in this industry also varies to some extent because of the seasonal fluctuation in demand for service, an indirect result of climatic variations. Although operations are interrupted completely during the winter in a large part of this industry, some companies try to keep part of their crews, particularly officers, busy all the year by using them to do repair and maintenance work in the slack season. A few firms encourage their men to accumulate leave credits so that this leave may be taken with pay when work is not available, thus delaying layoffs as long as possible.