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Friday, May 13, 1988

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OVERVIEW

■ Employment Growth Slows

In April, employment levels were virtually unchanged for the second consecutive month. Throughout 1987 and the opening months of 1988 employment grew strongly.

■ Moderate Advance in Construction Spending

In 1988, new construction in Canada is expected to rise 5.5% over 1987. This increase is significantly lower than the rate recorded in 1987 when residential construction showed very strong growth.

■ Farm Prices Drop

The farm product price index was down 0.6% in March, the first month-over-month decline in four months.

■ Notable Increase in the Help-wanted Index

The help-wanted index rose sharply in April, continuing the fluctuating trend evident for the last five months.

■ Labour Income Up 6.6% in February

The year-over-year increase in labour income continues to move within a narrow range close to the 1987 average.

■ New Housing Prices Continue to Rise

The new housing price index rose 0.9% in March, similar to the month-over-month change registered in February. The year-over-year movement, on the other hand, continued to moderate.

This issue also includes an article on enrolment in community colleges.

Employment Growth Slows

Labour force survey estimates for April indicated little overall change in employment levels from March. The unemployment rate declined slightly to 7.7%, reflecting a decrease in the labour force. The most notable declines in provincial unemployment rates so far this year have occurred in Nova Scotia (to 10.0% in April from 12.1% in January), New Brunswick (to 11.6% from 12.5%), Alberta (to 7.6% from 8.8%) and Ontario (to 4.8% from 5.6%). Other provinces have recorded little change or slightly increased rates.

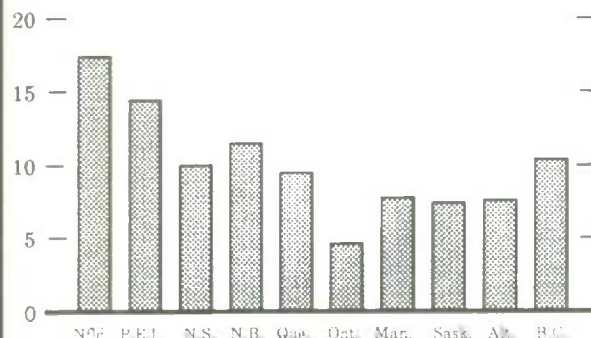
Following several months of strong gains, seasonally adjusted employment showed virtually no change during March and April. Since February employment has risen by 10,000, compared to a monthly average of 40,000 throughout 1987 and early 1988. In April, employment declined by 25,000 for men, mostly those aged 15 to 24. On the other hand, employment increased for women, particularly for those 25 or older. Full-time employment was little changed at 10,384,000, while part-time employment declined slightly.

Declines in employment were observed in agriculture, construction, public administration and transportation, communication and other utilities.

(continued on page 2)

Provincial Unemployment Rates, April 1988

(percent, seasonally adjusted data)



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... Employment Growth Slows

Manufacturing employment rose by 30,000 in April, following a gain of 14,000 in March. These advances suggest that manufacturing production may have recovered from its weak performance in February. Continuing employment gains were noted for the finance, insurance and real estate industry.

Quebec reported 23,000 fewer employed in April, following little change in February and March. Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia continued to lead all other provinces in employment growth in April.

The seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployment declined slightly (-11,000) in April to 1,025,000. The unemployment rate was estimated at 7.7%, a drop of 0.1% from March. The rate edged down to 6.5% among persons aged 25 and older, the lowest rate recorded since January 1982. The rate advanced slightly among young people aged 15 to 24, to 12.2%.

For further information, contact Household Surveys Division at (613) 951-4720 or order *The Labour Force* (catalogue number 71-001).

Moderate Advance in Construction Spending

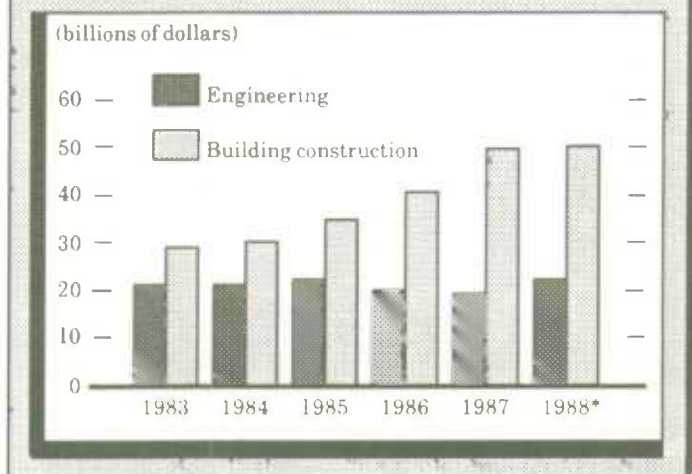
According to the results of the capital expenditures survey, which were released on March 9, \$73.5 billion should be spent on construction in Canada during 1988, up 5.5% over 1987. This growth rate is lower than that registered in the preceding year. Out of the total expenditures on construction, \$50.8 billion will be spent on residential and non-residential, and \$22.7 billion will be spent on engineering works.

Spending on residential construction is expected to decrease slightly (-1.3%) in 1988, after two years of very strong growth. Four provinces showed a downturn in residential construction intentions, with the largest decreases being recorded in Central Canada. In Quebec, spending is expected to drop 8.1%. In Ontario, investment in residential construction should drop 2.7%.

Non-residential construction will continue to expand in 1988, rising 6.5% over 1987. Commercial structures, where spending should increase by 8.6%, will be the strongest supporter of this trend. Investment in industrial and institutional structures will also grow, but at a more moderate rate.

Engineering construction, on the other hand, should rise by 16.4% in 1988, following a slight decrease in 1987. The main source of the advance in 1988 is expected to be gas and oil facilities, reflecting the recovery in crude oil prices noted in the latter half of 1987. Total spending on new construction of these types of structures is expected to reach \$6.8 billion. However, since the survey was conducted in late 1987, prices for crude oil have declined.

Investment in New Construction



* planned expenditures

Construction of electric power facilities will also make a significant contribution to the advance in engineering construction. In Manitoba, spending on electric power facilities will rise by almost 50% in 1988. This increase coupled with moderate advances in spending on most other structures gives Manitoba the fastest rate of recovery in engineering construction.

For further information, contact Science, Technology and Capital Stock Division at (613) 951-2591 or order *Construction in Canada* (catalogue number 64-201).

Farm Prices Drop

The farm product price index, which measures changes in prices received by producers when the ownership of commodities first changes, was down 0.6% in March. This was the first month-over-month decline in four months. Lower crop and livestock prices contributed to this decrease.

The crops index decreased for the first time in five months as oilseed, cereal and potato prices dropped in

March. The crops index has hovered around its present level since August 1987.

The oilseeds index decreased 1.6% in March, contrasting with the upturn noted between September and February. During that six-month period the oilseeds index rose 25%.

The cereals index stood at 47.6 in March, down 1.0% from the previous month. Lower wheat prices resulted

(continued on page 3)

... Farm Prices Drop

from a larger proportion of low quality wheat being delivered to the Canadian Wheat Board. The index was 13% below its level a year earlier and 56% below the January 1981 peak of 107.0.

The livestock and animal products index decreased 0.3%. This index declined from August to November, but has been relatively stable since then. In total, the index has fallen 6.5% since August.

Hog prices dropped 2.8% during the month, representing a return to the downward trend associated with increased pork production in Canada and the United States. Adverse weather conditions in the U.S. midwest had disrupted the movement of hogs to market in February and resulted in higher prices.

For further information, contact Agriculture Division at (613) 951-2437 or order Farm Product Price Index (catalogue number 62-001).

Notable Increase in the Help-wanted Index

- The help-wanted index increased six points to 149 in April.
- The help-wanted index monitors the space devoted to help-wanted ads published in 18 major metropolitan area newspapers and serves as an indicator of the demand for labour.
- The seasonally adjusted help-wanted index for Canada (1981=100) increased to 149 from 143 in April. This was the highest level recorded since 1962, the first year for which data are available.
- In April, the index increased in all regions except Quebec where it declined to 155 from 160. The index advanced to record levels in the Atlantic region (to 209 from 172) and in Ontario (to 201 from 194). It

Help-wanted Index (1981 = 100)

	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
	seasonally adjusted				
Canada	140	138	146	143	149
Atlantic Region	164	181	154	172	209
Quebec	150	144	163	160	155
Ontario	189	190	197	194	201
Prairie Region	58	62	58	60	70
British Columbia	55	58	58	56	60

increased in the Prairie region to 70 from 60, and in British Columbia to 60 from 56.

For further information, contact Labour Division at (613) 951-4045.

Labour Income Up 6.6% in February

Labour income grew 6.6% in February over the same month a year earlier, to a level of \$24.2 billion.

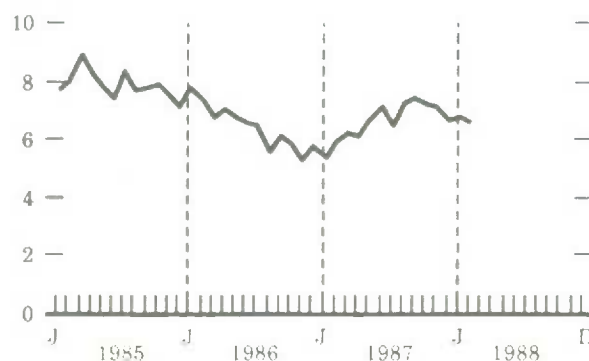
After adjusting for seasonal fluctuations, wages and salaries, which account for 90% of labour income, increased 0.6% in February over the previous month. This advance follows increases of 0.4% in December and 0.7% in January.

Mining registered strong growth for the third consecutive month, advancing 1.5% in February. Manufacturing increased 1.0% following a marginal decrease in January. Other increases were noted in the health and welfare services industry (1.5%), trade (1.1%), commercial and personal services (1.0%), and transportation, communication and other utilities (0.8%). Wages and salaries declined for the second consecutive month in construction and agriculture, fishing and trapping. The finance, insurance and real estate industry declined by 1.0% in February.

Manitoba and New Brunswick have recorded weak growth in wages and salaries for the last three months when compared to the other provinces.

Labour Income

(% change, previous year)



For further information, contact Labour Division at (613) 951-4051 or order Estimates of Labour Income (catalogue number 72-005).

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED FROM MAY 6 - 12

AGRICULTURE

Cereals and Oilseeds Review, January 1988. Catalogue number 22-007 (Canada: \$11.50/\$115; Other Countries: \$12.50/\$125).

Production and Stocks of Eggs and Poultry, February 1988. Catalogue number 23-003 (Canada: \$11/\$110; Other Countries: \$12/\$120).

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CENSUS

Equivalent Enumeration Areas, 1986 and 1981, April 1988. Catalogue number 99-127 (Canada: \$50; Other Countries: \$60).

Profiles - Federal Electoral Districts - 1987 Representation Order: Part 1, 1986 Census. Catalogue number 94-133 (Canada: \$38; Other Countries: \$40).

EDUCATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM

Financial Statistics of Community Colleges, Vocational Schools and Training in Hospitals, Vol. 10, No. 2. Catalogue number 81-002 (Canada: \$4.50/\$45; Other Countries: \$5.50/\$55).

GENERAL

Index to the Inventory of Statistics Canada Questionnaires on Microfiche, 1987. Catalogue number 12-205S (Canada: \$20; Other Countries: \$21).

Selected Publications - Statistics Canada, First Quarter 1988. Catalogue number 11-009E (Canada: \$4/\$16; Other Countries: \$5/\$20).

HEALTH

Causes of Death - Vital Statistics, Volume IV, 1986. Catalogue number 84-203 (Canada: \$40; Other Countries: \$42).

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION AND FINANCE

Industrial Corporations: Financial Statistics, Fourth Quarter 1987. Catalogue number 61-003 (Canada: \$50/\$200; Other Countries: \$60/\$240).

INDUSTRY

Campus Bookstores, Academic Year 1986-87. Catalogue number 63-219 (Canada: \$20; Other Countries: \$21).

Corrugated Boxes and Wrappers, March 1988. Catalogue number 36-004 (Canada: \$4.50/\$45; Other Countries: \$5.50/\$55).

Department Store Monthly Sales, by Province and Metropolitan Area, February 1988. Catalogue number 63-004 (Canada: \$2.50/\$25; Other Countries: \$3.50/\$35).

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Inventories, Shipments and Orders in Manufacturing Industries, January 1988. Catalogue number 31-001 (Canada: \$16.50/\$165; Other Countries: \$17.50/\$175).

Merchandising Inventories, December 1987. Catalogue number 63-014 (Canada: \$13/\$130; Other Countries: \$14/\$140).

Mineral Wool Including Fibrous Glass Insulation, March 1988. Catalogue Number 44-004 (Canada: \$4.50/\$45; Other Countries: \$5.50/\$55).

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Oil Pipe Line Transport, January 1988. Catalogue number 55-001 (Canada: \$9/\$90; Other Countries: \$10/\$100).

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Production of Selected Biscuits, Quarter Ended March 1988. Catalogue number 32-026 (Canada: \$6.25/\$25; Other Countries: \$7.25/\$29).

Production, Shipments and Stocks on Hand of Sawmills in British Columbia, January 1988. Catalogue number 35-003 (Canada: \$6.50/\$65; Other Countries: \$7.50/\$75).

Rigid Insulating Board, January 1988. Catalogue number 36-002 (Canada: \$4.50/\$45; Other Countries: \$5.50/\$55).

Rigid Insulating Board, February 1988. Catalogue number 36-002 (Canada: \$4.50/\$45; Other Countries: \$5.50/\$55).

Shipments of Plastic Film and Bags Manufactured from Resin, Quarter Ended December 31, 1987. Catalogue number 47-007 (Canada: \$6.25/\$25; Other Countries: \$7.25/\$29).

Stocks of Frozen Meat Products, April 1988. Catalogue number 32-012 (Canada: \$11.50/\$115; Other Countries: \$12.50/\$125).

Wholesale Trade, February 1988. Catalogue number 63-008 (Canada: \$5.50/\$55; Other Countries: \$6.50/\$65).

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Summary of Canadian International Trade (H.S. Based), February 1988. Catalogue number 65-001 (Canada: \$16.50/\$165; Other Countries: \$17.50/\$175).

LABOUR

Unemployment Insurance Statistics, January 1988. Catalogue number 73-001 (Canada: \$13/\$130; Other Countries: \$14/\$140).

PRICES

Industry Price Indexes, February 1988. Catalogue number 62-011 (Canada: \$16.50/\$165; Other Countries: \$18.50/\$185).

SERVICES

Restaurant, Caterer and Tavern Statistics, February 1988. Catalogue number 63-011 (Canada: \$5.50/\$55; Other Countries: \$6.50/\$65).

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND CAPITAL STOCK

Building Permits, December 1987. Catalogue number 64-001 (Canada: \$20/\$200; Other Countries: \$21/\$210).

Exploration, Development and Capital Expenditures for Mining and Petroleum and Natural Gas Wells, Intentions 1988. Catalogue number 61-216 (Canada: \$15; Other Countries: \$16).

TRANSPORT

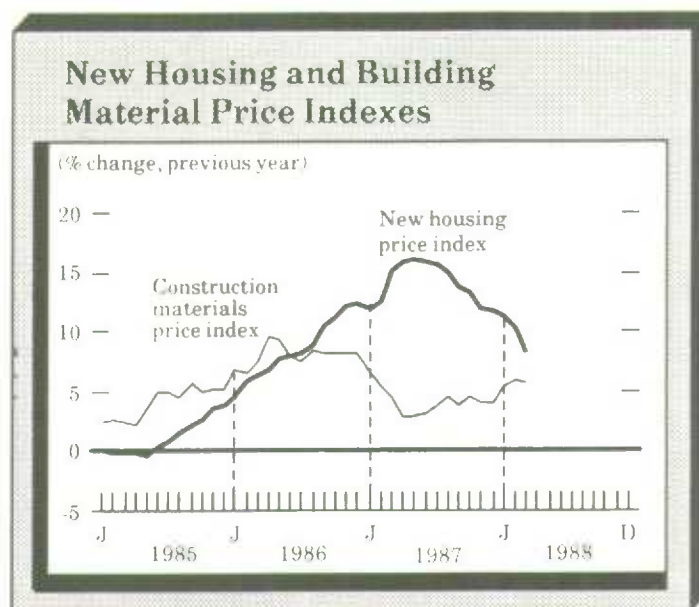
Air Carrier Operations in Canada, January-March 1987. Catalogue number 51-002 (Canada: \$22/\$88; Other Countries: \$23/\$92).

New House Prices Continue to Rise

The new housing price index (1981=100) for Canada stood at 126.0 in March, up 0.9% from February. This index of Canadian housing contractors' selling prices was 8.1% higher than the year-earlier level. Although the year-over-year increase was high compared to the price increases of 1985 and early 1986, it was significantly lower than the increases noted in 1987, when new house price increases peaked at 16% in May 1987.

Among the cities surveyed, St. Catherines-Niagara showed the largest month-to-month increase (1.8%), followed by Toronto with an increase of 1.6%. Southwestern Ontario cities, together with Montreal and Quebec City, maintained yearly gains that are higher than those experienced by other Canadian cities, with the exception of Calgary and Victoria. In Alberta and British Columbia, despite recent price increases, index levels remain below their 1981 price reference level of 100, with the exception of Calgary, now at 100.5.

Several factors contribute to new housing price movements, one of which is construction building materials prices. The accompanying chart, in addition to showing the deceleration in the yearly increases in



new housing prices, indicates an acceleration in construction building material prices in recent months. The chart suggests that other factors predominated during the 1987 advance in new housing prices.

For further information, contact Prices Division at (613) 951-9607 or order Construction Price Statistics (catalogue number 62-007).

Full-time Postsecondary Enrolment in Community Colleges

Preliminary data for the fall of 1987 indicate that full-time enrolment in postsecondary programs at community colleges and related institutions remained unchanged from the preliminary counts reported for the fall of 1986.

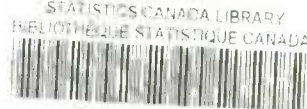
Over the last 15 years, postsecondary enrolment at community colleges and related institutions has registered an overall gain of 84.0%. This growth was fuelled by consecutive increases in enrolment up to 1985. Since then, however, enrolment declined slightly between 1985 and 1986 and was unchanged between 1986 and 1987.

Highlights from the preliminary data for the fall of 1987 include:

- In 1987, postsecondary enrolment remained stable at around 320,000 students. This was the net effect of a small decline in career/technical enrolment and a 1% gain in university transfer enrolments.

- Enrolment in university transfer programs in Quebec decreased by 1% from the preliminary counts of 1986. This had a major dampening impact on the total growth rate for Canada and has partly offset large gains in other areas since Quebec accounts for more than 85% of the students in this category.
- Career/technical enrolment increased by 49.0% in the Yukon and 12.0% in the Northwest Territories. Although this represented the largest percentage increases in enrolment, the actual increase in the number of students was relatively small compared to other jurisdictions.
- In both Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, enrolment in career/technical programs declined by 4.0%.
- Since 1971, the overall increase in enrolments recorded by career/technical programs has been identical to that of university transfer programs.

For further information, contact Education, Culture and Tourism Division at (613) 951-1526.



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LATEST MONTHLY STATISTICS

			Previous Month	% Change From Year Ago
EMPLOYMENT, INCOME				
Average Weekly Earnings (\$)	Feb.	455.73	454.50	4.4
Labour Income (\$ million)	Feb.*	24,221	24,217	6.6
Persons with Jobs (million)	Apr.*	12.08	12.00	3.8
Unemployed (thousand)	Apr.*	1,085	1,181	-14.6
INVENTORIES				
Department Store (\$ million)	Feb.	4,208	3,749	4.8
Manufacturers' Owned (\$ million)	Feb.	35,371	34,911	5.2
ORDERS				
Manufacturers' New Orders (\$ million)	Feb.	22,408	21,518	9.2
Manufacturers' Unfilled Orders (\$ million)	Feb.	25,013	24,747	4.7
PRICES				
Consumer Price Index (1981 = 100)	Mar.	142.0	141.3	4.1
New House Price Index (1981 = 100)	Mar.*	126.0	124.9	8.1
Raw Materials Price Index (1981 = 100)	Mar.	98.3	98.9	0.8
Excl. minerals fuels	Mar.	113.0	112.1	8.5
Industrial Product Price Index (1981 = 100)	Mar.	125.9	125.5	4.6
CONSTRUCTION				
Building Permits (\$ million)	Dec.	2,409	30,437	23.3
Housing Starts - Urban Centres (units)	Feb.	9,173	20,860	-13.6
ENERGY				
Coal Production (thousand tonnes)	Jan.	6,192	6,192	27.0
Electricity Generation (gigawatt hours)	Jan.	48,949	48,949	4.2
Natural Gas Production (million cubic metres)	Jan.	12,462	12,462	2.9
FOREIGN TRADE				
Exports - Balance of Payments Basis (\$ million)	Feb.	10,951	21,260	9.4
Imports - Balance of Payments Basis (\$ million)	Feb.	10,140	19,844	12.9
SALES				
Department Store Sales (\$ million)	Feb.	715	1,445	2.1
Manufacturers' Shipments (\$ million)	Feb.	22,143	43,300	8.5
New Motor Vehicle Sales (\$ million)	Feb.	1,730	3,223	13.9
Refined Petroleum Products (thousand cubic metres)	Feb.	6,638	13,217	6.2
Retail Sales (\$ million)	Feb.	11,100	22,300	9.9

Statistics are in current dollars and are not seasonally adjusted.
* new this week.

I.N.F.O.M.A.T

A Weekly Review

Published by the Communications Division
Statistics Canada.

Senior Editor: Greg Thomson (613) 951-1116
Editor: Linda McCormick (613) 951-1197

R.H. Coats Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

Catalogue: 11-002E. Price: Canada, \$2/\$100; other countries, \$3/\$150. To subscribe: send money order or cheque payable to the Receiver General for Canada/Publication Sales, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6 or telephone Publication Sales at 1-800-267-6677.

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