

Jobs Show Winter Up Turn

OTTAWA (CP) — Unemployment, which usually rises between mid-January and mid-February, resisted that trend this year and did the reverse, dropping slightly to 398,000 from 406,000.

Figures released Wednesday showed the national jobless rate running at 5.8 per cent in February compared to seven per cent a year earlier and 8.4 per cent in February of 1963. It was six per cent in January.

In the year-to-year comparison, the labor force grew by 2.3 per cent to 6,844,000, the number at work rose by 3.6 per cent to 6,446,000 and unemployment fell 17 per cent to 398,000 from 467,000.

The joint report by the bureau of statistics and the labor department said the gain in non-farm jobs for the year was 285,000 or five per cent while employment dipped by 62,000, almost 11 per cent.

Reviewing the January to February situation, the report said employment held up well in almost all non-farm industries with construction "very active for the time of year." Much of the construction surge was in housing, stimulated by the \$500 federal bonus on winter-built homes.

ATLANTIC FIGURES BAD
Unemployment rates dropped in all regions except the Atlantic provinces, long the darkest spot in the national employment picture. There the 78,000 unemployed represented 13 per cent of the labor force, a rise from 10.8 per cent in January and 12.7 in February of last year.

In Ontario, the unemployment rate dipped to 3.7 per cent in February, the Prairie rate stood at four, British Columbia's was 5.8 and Quebec's 7.4, all down slightly from January.

Employment was higher in all regions than the year-earlier figures with B.C. posting the best gain, 5.8 per cent.

Adjusted to remove seasonal variations, the jobless rate stood at a flat four per cent, a figure matched only once since 1957 and that was just last December. The adjusted rate for January was 4.3 per cent.

The unemployed included 336,000 men, down 64,000 on the year, and 60,000 women, down 8,000. An estimated 25,000 of the women were married.

Oratorical Contest Held At Spring Park

The Spring Park United Church Men held a father-son banquet Tuesday evening in the church hall. A special feature of the evening was an oratorical contest for boys in the church. Last evening's winners will represent Spring Park in an island-wide competition sponsored by the United Church.

Jack Kipping won the junior section of the contest for boys aged 8-11. Donald Campbell was second and Elwood Goodwin was third. The boys had to speak for three minutes on "What the Church means to me. The senior division was won by Hal Dunsford who spoke for eight minutes on "Faith".

Over 90 people attended the banquet, and the judges had a difficult time choosing the winners in the various categories. Judges for last evening's contest were Rev. Henry Tye, Park Royal, Rev. Gerald Wryas, Trinity, and Dr. Donald MacKay, Charlottetown.

Chairman for the evening was Ernie Lord and Ralph Mallett handled the entries for the contest. Supper was provided by the first and second units of the Spring Park Women's Association.

Drought Hits South Africa

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) — One of the worst droughts of the century is posing a serious threat to the livelihood of many of South Africa's farmers and rural shopkeepers.

Many farmers in parts of northern and western Transvaal have had to leave their withered-up holdings and seek employment in towns and cities.

Crops in these areas have been almost totally destroyed and grazing for livestock is reported to be extremely poor. Serious stock losses are reported from all parts of the union.

Water has been scarce for six consecutive years in the northern provinces. Farmers say that even if it should rain in the near future there is scarcely any prospect of crops being harvested.

Park Project Planned In N.S.

OTTAWA (CP) — The resources department will spend some \$645,000 during 1965 in developing Kedgemoke National Park in Nova Scotia, resources Minister Laing told the Commons Wednesday.

Development work on the park would start this spring, he said in reply to a written question by Lloyd R. Crouse (PC-Queens-Lunenburg).

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