

WORLD PRICE MOVEMENTS: Practically all national wholesale price index numbers continued to move upward in the first half of 1948, increases ranging from 0.3 per cent for Switzerland to 38.9 per cent for France. Between these extremes, increases of one to 10 per cent predominated. Declines over the six-month period were recorded by series for Italy and Spain, reports the Bureau of Statistics.

Among cost-of-living series, increases in the first half of 1948 ranged from fractional gains for Switzerland, Spain and Egypt, to 22 per cent for Japan (28 towns), and 672 per cent for Shanghai. Small decreases were shown by Series for Portugal and Iceland. The majority of increases were from one to 10 per cent, and in many cases these showed a slower rate of advance than in the second half of 1947. The Canadian June, 1948 index of 154.3 (1935-39=100) was 5.7 per cent above December, 1947 and 2.5 per cent above July, 1920, the peak following World War I. The United States consumers' price index, on the same base was 171.1, 2.8 per cent above December, 1947 and 14.9 per cent above its June, 1920 high. The United Kingdom interim index of retail prices mounted 5.8 per cent in the first half of 1948 to register a 10 per cent increase over its base period level of June, 1947.

SMALLER RATES OF ADVANCE

Wholesale price index numbers for the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all recorded smaller rates of advance in the first half of 1948 than in the previous half year. The Canadian index for June this year was 5.9 per cent above December and 18.7 per cent above June, 1947. The U.S. Bureau of Labour monthly index showed a December-June rise of 1.8 per cent. A break in farm prices was responsible for a sharp February drop of 2.9 per cent, but it was followed by advances which brought the June, 1948 index to 166.2. This was 0.6 per cent below the May, 1920 peak, which subsequently was passed. Increases of 3.9 per cent and 3.2 per cent for Australia and New Zealand were moderate compared with gains made in the latter half of 1947 when the partial removal of subsidies was followed by unusual advances in both series. A sharp out-turn in June in the South African index was largely responsible for the net December-June increase of 5.1 per cent.

The United Kingdom Board of Trade index rose 9.1 per cent in the first half of 1948; foods were up 7.3 per cent and industrial material and manufactures 10.2 per cent. Other European index numbers revealed considerable diversity of pattern in the first half of 1948. The Italian wholesale price index moved down 6.9 per cent in this period, continuing a decline which began in September, 1947. The Spanish index receded 1.3 per cent from the all-time high of December, 1947. The Netherlands series recorded no change between December and June, although intervening months were fractionally below the December level. Series

for Switzerland, Portugal, Norway and Czechoslovakia accumulated small gains ranging from 0.3 per cent to 2.3 per cent. Sweden and Denmark, with larger increases, 5.4 per cent and 5.8 per cent, respectively, showed slightly accelerated rates of rise in this period. Most substantial increases on record for the European group were Finland and France, with percentage advances of 9.1 and 38.9 per cent, respectively.

ELECTRIC REFRIGERATORS: Canadian manufacturers produced a record number of domestic type electric refrigerators in September. The month's output totalled 12,349 units compared with 9,531 in the preceding month and 10,123 in the corresponding month last year, according to figures released by the Bureau of Statistics. This brought the nine-month aggregate to 99,736 units, which was 40 per cent higher than last year's total of 71,189.

Exports of Canadian-made units were maintained at a comparatively high level in September, totalling 1,423 units compared with 1,923 in August and 677 a year ago. Imports were down sharply from a year ago, amounting to 32 units in September, 46 in August and 5,259 in September, 1947.

Manufacturers' stocks at the end of September amounted to 1,940 units as against 1,304 a year ago.

TANNING INDUSTRY RECORD: Factory value of products turned out by the Canadian tanning industry reached a record high figure of \$69,240,000 in 1947, an increase of 21.4 per cent over the preceding year. The increase was due to higher prices, as the number of hides handled decreased by two per cent.

The principal kinds of leather produced included oak-tanned sold leather to the value of \$16,250,000, cattle and horse hide upper leather \$15,280,000, calf skin upper leather \$13,237,000, and glove leather, \$4,518,000. The value of these four items combined accounted for 71 per cent of the total value of output.

LABOUR RELATIONS: The Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell, announced November 24 that Regulations under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act and Rules of Procedure of the Canada Labour Relations Board have gone into effect, following their approval by the Governor-General in Council and publication in the Canada Gazette.

The Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Regulations lay down the procedure to be followed in dealing with the various matters which the Act places within the administrative jurisdiction of the Minister of Labour, including requests for the appointment of Conciliation Officers and Conciliation Boards, complaints that employers or trade

unions or individuals have violated provisions of the Act, applications for the Minister's consent to prosecute parties alleged to have committed offences under the Act, and applications for the appointment of Industrial Inquiry Commissioners.

The Rules of Procedure of the Canada Labour Relations Board relate to those matters which fall within the administrative jurisdiction of the Board, including applications for the granting or revocation of certificates as bargaining agents, applications for the prescription of provisions for the final settlement of differences concerning the meaning or violation of collective agreements, and complaints alleging failure to bargain collectively which may be referred to the Board by the Minister.

Mr. Mitchell said that copies of the Regulations and of the Rules of Procedure will be distributed in the near future to all Canadian trade unions, employers' organizations, and interested federal and provincial Government officials and agencies.

TWO NEW FIGHTER SQUADRONS: Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence, on November 24 announced that the first of Canada's two new jet interceptor fighter squadrons is to form December 1 at the RCAF's new Operational Training Unit at St. Hubert, P.Q. The squadron will carry out operational training there before moving on to Mont Joli, P.Q., its intended home base. Formation of the second squadron is to follow in 1949.

The first of the two squadrons, 310, will train on Vampire jet fighters at St. Hubert, and aircrew personnel will include both wartime veterans and pilots having earned their wings since the war. Continuation training will be carried out at the squadron's base after the unit leaves St. Hubert.

Decision to form the two interceptor squadrons had previously been announced by Mr. Claxton, as had the formation of the OTU at St. Hubert. Formation of these units falls in line with Service expectations that one of Canada's major operational roles, in possible future air warfare, would be to provide immediate interceptor forces. Eight of the ten Auxiliary Squadrons already formed are also fighter or interceptor squadrons.

LONG TERM TRAINING

The St. Hubert OTU will carry on with its long term training aspects upon completion of the special squadron training, taking in classes of "new" aircrew from basic flying training schools, converting them to jet aircraft and instructing them in interceptor air defence operations. Pilots will be posted to operational appointments on completion of their courses there.

The two new squadrons perpetuate famous flying units of the Second World War. No. 410

Squadron will carry on the traditions of the well-known Cougar Squadron, a night-fighter unit which operated from the United Kingdom against enemy bombers; moving on to the Continent in the Autumn of 1944. The squadron was adopted by St. John, N.B. The second squadron, 421, perpetuates the Red Indian Squadron, a wartime day-fighter unit. No. 421 was formed in April, 1942, and operated from the United Kingdom, moving to the Continent shortly after the invasion, where it operated as part of the 2nd Tactical Air Force.

One of its outstanding wartime commanding officers was S/L R.W. McNair, DSO, DFC, now a member of the Regular RCAF.

Named as commanding officer of the St. Hubert OTU is S/L D.G. Malloy, DFC, of Halifax, N.S., a noted fighter pilot during the war. S/L Malloy commanded 402 squadron overseas, and since 1946 has been officer commanding 9438 Support Unit, St. Hubert.

Commanding officer of 410 squadron will be S/L R.A. Kipp, DSO, DFC, of Kamloops, B.C., another well known wartime fighter pilot. He was the first member of the RCAF to destroy 4 aircraft in one night, and during the war destroyed 18 enemy aircraft, damaging 8 others. For the past year he has been Personal Staff officer to the AOC North West Air Command.

Other operational squadrons already in being include two photo survey squadrons, two transport squadrons, one communications squadron, in addition to a number of Search and transport flights. Elements of the Mobile Tactical Wing are presently engaged in training exercises at the Joint Air School, Rivers, Man.

RELATIONS WITH IRELAND: The Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, made the following statement on November 25:

"A meeting attended by the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, took place in Paris on November 16, 1948, with representatives of the Government of Ireland, to discuss matters arising out of the forthcoming repeal of that country's External Relations Act. Following these discussions, the Government of Canada has been giving consideration to the position which will result when the new enactment comes into force.

"The Prime Minister of Ireland yesterday stated that Ireland recognizes and confirms the existence of a specially close relationship with the nations of the Commonwealth. Mr. Costello went on to express the firm desire that this relationship should be maintained and strengthened.

"The Canadian Government also desires that close and friendly relations between Canada and Ireland should be maintained and strengthened and is studying the measures which may be necessary and possible to give effect to that desire."