

## NEW COMMISSIONER TO COLOMBO

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Howard Green, has announced the appointment of Mr. James George as High Commissioner for Canada to Ceylon. Mr. George succeeds Mr. R.G. (Nik) Cavell, who will shortly be retiring from the Canadian diplomatic service.

Mr. George joined the Department of External Affairs in 1945. He served abroad in Athens, and with the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations in New York. He is at present serving in Paris with the Delegation of Canada to the North Atlantic Council.

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## INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT, 1958

The composite employment index (1949=100) was 117.9, down 3.8 per cent from the 1957 average of 122.6. The loss among men was relatively much larger than for women, who are normally concentrated in industries in which employment tends to be relatively stable. *Per capita* weekly wages and salaries continued to rise, with the 1958 figure reaching \$70.43, up 3.7 per cent from the 1957 mean of \$67.93. The composite index of payrolls was down slightly, declining from 194.7 in 1957 to 194.1 in 1958.

During 1958 there was little variation in the industrial composite-index numbers of employment, except for normal seasonal movements. The decline that had developed in the second half of 1957 was arrested early in 1958, and there was some strengthening in the general industrial situation at the end of the year. Nevertheless, the seasonally-adjusted composite index declined between June and November. Major decreases in employment caused by strikes in several industries had a serious effect during the autumn. The number of employees off work as a direct result of disputes reached a peak of 40,000 during October, with others indirectly affected.

The employment situation in different industrial divisions varied materially during 1958. In trade and mining, employment exceeded the levels of a year before only in the first quarter of 1958 and then declined. Mining suffered from strikes towards the end of 1958. A downturn had been evident, however, some months before the disputes began. On the other hand, employment continued to expand throughout the year in service, public utility and finance, insurance and real-estate industries. The last two showed some slowing in the rate of growth towards the end of the year, but the index numbers were higher each month than in the corresponding period of 1957.

Employment in construction, transportation, storage and communication declined during the first part of the year. The trend was reversed in later months, but the December levels were under those of 1957 in these groups. Manufacturing was slacker in each of 12 months. The falling-off in the year-to-year

comparison diminished towards the latter part of 1958, however, and by December amounted to only 2.2 points in the index. Logging was quieter than in any earlier year for a lengthy period, although the December index was slightly above its position of 12 months before.

Average weekly wages and salaries generally rose in 1958, continuing the uninterrupted series of increases recorded since 1939. For the whole year, the gain over 1957 amounted to 3.7 per cent and the index advanced to 163.9. However, the rate of increase was below the average annual gain of 5.8 per cent recorded in the last decade.

Prices of consumer goods and services continued to rise in 1958, although more slowly than during the preceding year, and the purchasing power of earnings showed little change. Average weekly wages and salaries in constant (1949) dollars rose by only 0.2 per cent during 1958, registering the smallest gain in the 1948-58 period.

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## FREIGHT ASSISTANCE CHANGES

Freight assistance regulations on Western Canadian feed grains and millfeeds have been amended, effective May 9, to provide for rates of assistance on water-borne grain to the Maritime Provinces and to adjust assistance levels owing to a slight lowering of rail tariffs.

Eligible products delivered in the Maritime Provinces by boat will now receive assistance by \$11.00 a ton. The new rate follows the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway, which enabled large boats to carry grain from the Lakehead directly to points in the Maritimes at a reduced freight cost.

As a result of an order of the Board of Transport Commissioners, railway tariffs will be further reduced by approximately 2 per cent. This lowering required adjustments in the scale of freight assistance payments. The adjustments, effective May 9, provide a reduction in freight costs to farmers in Eastern Canada equivalent to the railway tariff reduction.

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## TCA JETS TAKE TO THE AIR

On April 30, Trans-Canada Air Lines completed its first full month of trans-continental jet operation, establishing new records in speed, comfort and service to Canadian air-travellers.

The airline's two Douglas DC-8 jetliners missed only two return flights during the 30 days of operation, both owing to minor mechanical difficulties. These flights, between Toronto and Vancouver, were replaced by "Super Constellation" services.

Average speeds between Montreal and Vancouver during the month were 495 miles an hour