

FOREIGN TRADE DOWN: Canada's foreign commodity trade was lower in value in May and the first five months of this year than a year earlier, according to preliminary figures released June 23 by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Both exports and imports declined in value but the drop in imports was sharper than that for exports. The result was a reduced import surplus both in May and the January-May period.

Total exports in May were valued at \$363, -600,000 as compared with \$385,000,000 in the same month last year, and commodity imports had an estimated value of \$365,900,000 as compared with \$420,500,000. The greater drop in imports reduced the import surplus to \$2,300, -000 as compared with \$35,500,000 in May last year.

In the January-May period exports had an aggregate value of \$1,528,000,000 as compared with \$1,603,700,000 last year, and estimated imports were worth \$1,649,700,000 as compared with \$1,810,300,000. The January-May import surplus was thus cut to \$121,700,000 from \$206,600,000 in the like 1953 period.

TRADE WITH U.S.

Trade with the United States was at a lower level both in May and the January-May period. Exports in the month declined to \$213,000,000 from \$224,200,000, and estimated imports dropped to \$262,300,000 from \$312,300,000. The estimated import surplus was reduced to \$49, -300,000 from \$88,100,000. Aggregate January-May exports declined to \$932,100,000 from \$991,400,000, estimated imports to \$1,217, -700,000 from \$1,372,600,000, and the cumulative import surplus to \$285,600,000 from \$381, -000,000.

Exports to the United Kingdom in May were down to \$62,500,000 from \$68,500,000 a year earlier, and estimated imports declined to \$36,000,000 from \$43,600,000. The resulting export surplus rose to \$26,500,000 from \$24, -900,000 a year earlier. In the January-May period exports were slightly lower at \$237, -800,000 as compared with \$238,500,000, and estimated imports were down to \$160,500,000 from \$176,800,000, the cumulative export surplus rising to \$77,300,000 from \$61,700,000.

May's exports to the rest of the Commonwealth were moderately lower in value at \$19, -800,000 as compared with \$21,100,000, and estimated imports were down a shade to \$17, -000,000 from \$17,600,000. Cumulative exports in the January-May period dropped to \$76,400, -000 from \$94,200,000 a year earlier, but estimated imports were slightly higher at \$60, -900,000 compared with \$59,300,000.

Exports to all other countries in May sloped off to \$68,300,000 from \$71,200,000 a year ago, but estimated imports climbed to \$50,600,000 from \$47,000,000. In the cumulative period total exports advanced to \$281,700,000 from \$279,600,000, and estimated imports increased to \$210,600,000 from \$201,600,000.

MEETING IN OTTAWA: The Department of External Affairs announced on June 24 that the annual meeting of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee will be held in Ottawa from October 4 to October 9. This meeting, which will be attended by Cabinet Ministers or other representatives from fourteen Colombo Plan countries, will be preceded by a meeting of officials from these countries which will commence on September 20.

The Ottawa meeting of the Consultative Committee will be the first to take place in North America. Previous meetings were held in Australia, United Kingdom, Ceylon, Pakistan and India.

Both the official and the ministerial sessions will be held in the Parliament Buildings. The opening ministerial session, which will probably take place in the House of Commons Chamber, will be open to the public. It will be addressed by Prime Minister St. Laurent and by leaders of some of the visiting delegations.

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The members of the Consultative Committee are Australia, Burma, Canada, Cambodia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Viet-Nam. Dependent territories of the United Kingdom in South-East Asia, viz., the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, North Borneo and Sarawak also fall within the scope of the Colombo Plan. Thailand and the Philippines have sent observers to previous meetings of the Consultative Committee and have been invited to be represented at the Ottawa meetings.

Two agencies of the United Nations, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far-East, which have been closely associated with many Colombo Plan countries in the field of economic development, have sent observers to previous meetings of the Consultative Committee, and it is expected that they will be represented at the Ottawa meetings.

The Director of the Council for Technical Co-Operation, which is concerned with the technical assistance as distinct from the capital development aspect of the Colombo Plan, and the head of the Colombo Plan Information Unit, a new office which will shortly commence operation, are also expected to attend the Ottawa meetings.

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Co-operatives marketed close to 36% of the farm products sold during the crop year ended July 31, 1952. Total sales value was \$927, -600,000, some \$158,000,000 or more than one-fifth greater than in the preceding year. Co-operative sales per farm averaged \$1,340, over four and one-half times the 1941 average of \$293 per farm.