

TRACING ORIGINS OF NARCOTICS: Scientists in the Department of National Health and Welfare's Food and Drugs Laboratory at Ottawa have applied known methods of examination in a manner that provided practical identification of the source of samples of opium, it was revealed on May 4, by the Hon. Paul Martin, Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Mr. Martin said that Canadian researchers have been part of a United Nations team working on the problem of tracing the origin of opium in collaboration with scientists from Israel, France, Sweden, Norway, the United States, the United Kingdom, India, China, the Netherlands and many other countries. The procedures, make it possible, he said, to determine beyond a reasonable doubt the country from which the opium comes. The procedures, Mr. Martin said, should be a valuable aid in the narcotics control program of the United Nations organization.

The Canadian research on the project was carried out under the direction of Dr. C.A. Morrell, Director of the Department's Food and Drug Divisions, and Dr. L.I. Pugsley, Assistant Director of Scientific Services.

The Ottawa researchers have concentrated on studies of opium ash, which depends on such factors as the soil, the climate and the environment of the area which produced the plant. These studies, combined with the determination of the alkaloids in the opium, give accurate indications as to where the material was grown and processed.

Tested on opium samples provided by the United Nations, the Canadian detection system scored a 100 per cent record of accuracy, and Canadian scientists believe that the method will stand up under the test of time.

Mr. Martin pointed out that the results achieved in the Canadian laboratory were greatly assisted by the volume of research in other lands on the same project. "Our idea was not an entirely new one", Mr. Martin said, "Our scientists just worked on a slightly different slant of the problem". Study of the origin of raw opium has been under way under the general direction of the United Nations for the past five years. Almost 30 scientists in many lands have participated in the study.

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CANADA-U. S. TRAFFIC UP: Volume of highway traffic between Canada and the United States was 2% greater in February than in the corresponding month last year. Aggregate border crossings numbered 675,800 vehicles compared with 662,200. The increase in the number of foreign vehicles was between 1 and 2%, and the increase in Canadian vehicles returning was nearly 3%.

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Provincial Governments spent \$392,587,000 on health and social welfare in 1952, almost \$10,000,000 more than in 1951.

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY: The increasing part being taken by women in Canada's industrial expansion is reflected in a series of articles under the general heading "Womanpower" which begins in the April issue of the Labour Gazette, it was announced today by the Hon. Milton F. Cregg, Minister of Labour. The series of articles is being compiled to provide a reliable handbook of information on Canada's womanpower.

The opening article points out that until 1891 there were not enough women in Canada employed outside their homes to warrant inclusion in the census records. By May 1953, however, there were 1,170,000 women in the Canadian labour force. This situation was undoubtedly hastened by two global wars followed by postwar conditions with their consequent upsurge of production of civilian goods and sharply rising living costs.

Prior to the 1939-45 war, the number of married women working outside their homes in peacetime was negligible. Today, however, faced with high living costs and with the leisure and urge to continue in work for which they may have been trained, married women represent more than 25 per cent of all women in Canada employed in non-agricultural work.

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DEFENCE ORDERS: A list of defence contracts for \$10,000 or more awarded to Canadian firms by the Department of Defence Production and Defence Construction (1951) Limited for the last half of March was released here today.

Contracts for petroleum products on a fiscal year basis made up a large part of the total. Altogether, 73 contracts with a total value of \$22,944,488 were issued for gasoline, fuel oils and lubricants. An order for T-34 aircraft valued at \$1,441,176 was awarded to Canadian Car and Foundry Co. Ltd., while Rubenstein Bros Ltd., received a clothing contract worth \$1,021,724. Other awards, totalling \$3,412,160, went to Chrysler and General Motors and covered truck and spare parts requirements.

The list, including contracts valued at \$482,523 placed by Defence Construction (1951) Limited, totalled \$40,717,105. Contracts classified for security reasons and amendments to contracts were not included in the list.

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STEEL INGOTS OUTPUT: Canadian steel mills produced 258,765 tons of steel ingots in February, 18% less than last year's corresponding tonnage of 316,741. Since January's output was down 14% to 290,487 tons from 339,215 a year earlier, the combined production for the January-February period declined to 549,252 tons from 655,956. The daily average output for February fell to 9,242 tons from 11,312, and the 2-month average was down to 9,309 tons from 11,118.