

(C.W.B. June 22, 1960)

AIRPORT FOR MAGDALENS

Transport Minister George Hees was present on June 9 at a ceremony of acceptance by the municipality of House Harbour, Magdalen Islands, of the airport works constructed by the Department of Transport.

The project consists of two hard-surfaced runways, one 3,600 feet, the other 3,725 feet, long, on Alright Island. The work was carried out by the Department through an agreement with the municipality of House Harbour, in which the municipality acquired the airport site and will operate the airport. The House Harbour airport serves as a main aviation link between these islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the mainland, and its construction has overcome difficulties experienced when earlier, unpaved, air-strips became un-serviceable from time to time as a result of bad weather.

Taking part in the acceptance ceremony, in addition to Mr. Hees and a party of Transport Department officials, were His Excellency Most Reverend Paul Bernier, Archbishop of Gaspé; Mayor Didier Cyr of House Harbour, who acted as master of ceremonies; Russel Keays, Member of Parliament for Magdalen Islands, and Carl Burke, managing director of Maritime Central Airways. The ceremony ended with the blessing of the airport by Archbishop Bernier.

During the day Mr. Hees and his party also inspected the recently-established automatic telephone exchange, installed by the Department of Transport on Grindstone Island. The system has replaced the old magneto-type telephone service that once served the Magdalens. There are now 1,600 subscribers and, where, formerly, there were as many as 40 to each party line, the service now provides for about four a line. The various islands are linked by either cable or radio circuits, and it is now planned to triple the radio circuits to Sydney, Nova Scotia, where the Magdalens system is connected with commercial mainland telephone service.

* * * *

IMPORTS & EXPORTS

Canada's commodity imports and exports during April were both lower in value than during the corresponding month last year, according to preliminary figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The Easter holidays, which occurred in April this year and in March last year, may have been a factor in these comparisons.

Imports were lower in value in April than in the corresponding month last year from the United States, the United Kingdom, other Commonwealth countries as a group, and in total from all other countries. Exports were up to the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries, and down to the United States and other foreign countries as a group. The decli-

ne in the dollar value of imports was slightly greater than in exports, resulting in a smaller imports balance.

Total imports in April are estimated at \$477,100,000, a decrease of 7.8 per cent from \$517,600,000 in April last year, while total exports in the month were valued at \$368,800,000, down 8.3 per cent from \$402,400,000 a year earlier. The excess of imports over exports thus declined to \$108,300,000 from \$115,200,000 in the corresponding month last year.

In the January-April period imports were up 4.1 per cent to an estimated \$1,805,800,000, against \$1,735,100,000 in the same period last year, while total exports were up 14.2 per cent to \$1,660,400,000 from \$1,453,700,000. The excess of imports over exports consequently fell to \$145,400,000 from \$281,400,000 in the like 1959 period.

Imports from the United States in April declined to an estimated \$326,800,000 from \$355 million a year ago, while total exports to that country fell to \$232,800,000 from \$261,300,000, and the import balance was little changed at \$94 million against \$93,700,000. Over the four months imports were larger than in 1959, at \$1,268,900,000 against \$1,225,900,000, as were total exports at \$1,001,100,000 against \$908,900,000. The cumulative import balance was smaller at \$267,800,000 versus \$317 million in 1959.

Imports from the United Kingdom in April were slightly lower this year than last, at \$57,900,000 against \$59,600,000, while total exports showed a small increase to \$57,300,000 from \$56 million. In the January-April period imports were up to \$200,200,000 from \$167,300,000 and total exports to \$266,600,000 from \$219,700,000. There was an import surplus in April of \$600,000 against \$3,600,000 a year earlier and an export surplus in the four-month period of \$66,400,000 versus \$52,400,000.

* * * *

MORE TRADES TRAINING NEEDED:

"The demand for skilled tradesmen could exceed the supply in any future expansion of the economy unless steps are taken now to develop more industrial training programmes in Canada," Mr. Michael Starr, Minister of Labour, said recently, when announcing the release of a new booklet on apprenticeship training in manufacturing.

"There has been a gradual increase in the number of formal apprenticeship programmes in the manufacturing industries, but it is evident that those companies which are training apprentices are only a minority of the firms which might conceivably establish such programmes," he added.

"In the period immediately following the Second World War, this country's training programmes were inadequate to meet manpower requirements, and although there has been much