

### EEC and Group of Ten finance ministers confer

On March 9, Finance Minister John Turner attended in Paris a meeting of finance ministers of the Group of Ten countries and of all members of the European Economic Community. The question before the meeting was how best to relieve the speculative pressures affecting currency values which had led to the withdrawal of European and Japanese authorities from their exchange markets on March 2.

Mr. Turner's report on March 13 to the House of Commons follows:

...The meeting on Friday last permitted a useful exchange of views but could not arrive at any definite conclusions until the European countries had decided themselves whether to define fixed rates of exchange or to float and, if the latter, whether to float in unison or separately.

The Europeans made their own decisions Sunday night and, as is now known, beginning next Monday six countries will float jointly against the U.S. dollar; three others, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Italy, will for the time being float separately. Until next Monday, the European and Japanese markets will remain closed as they have been since March 2.

At a further meeting on Friday next which I shall be attending, there will be discussion of certain possibilities of co-operation between the European countries and others and we will no doubt discuss plans for expediting work now in train on the total reform of the monetary system.

Although the decisions taken last weekend do not have any direct, immediate consequences for Canada, I believe they will be helpful in reducing the speculative pressures that have been affecting certain exchange rates. By permitting the exchange-rate system to react more directly to fundamental market forces, the decisions will set the stage for the basic reforms that are required.

Given Canada's great stake in foreign trade, we feel it is urgent to re-establish a calm, orderly international monetary regime and we shall participate actively in the international discussions and decisions directed to this vital objective.

This is a difficult time with respect to international trade and payments and much work lies ahead. While contributing all we can to the international discussions, we must make every effort to maintain the strength of our industries so that they will be able to meet competition and provide jobs for Canadians....

### Revised pension rules for Canadians living in Britain

Former residents of Canada who live in Britain and are eligible for the British retirement pension may now receive it at age 65 by virtue of letters signed recently by Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde and the British High Commissioner, Sir Peter Hayman.

The agreement, signed on March 9, amends a 1959 Exchange of Letters

under which at age 70, certain former residents of Canada who lived in Britain and were ineligible for Canadian old age security could count Canadian residence as periods of contributions to the British program. It brings British age and residence requirements for such persons into accord with those of Canadian Old Age Security legislation.

### McGill shows the value of value engineering

It has usually been taken for granted that collaboration between university and industry referred to Professor X, Y or Z's involvement with Company A, B or C's project. Fifty-three me-

chanical engineering students from McGill University, Montreal, know better. Together with eight professors, the students have been working with personnel from Dominion Engineering

Works, Montreal Armature Works and Canadian General Electric (the parent company of the other two) in a combined effort to solve practical industrial problems in a workshop.

The students, professors and industrial personnel employed the principles of "value engineering", a method used by government and industry for almost four decades but only now generating widespread interest. It usually consists of assigning a task force of five or six people within a company (drawn from departments of engineering, design, production, marketing, sales, etc.) to analyze "in depth" the value of a chosen product, design, or process. The analysis consists of isolating all the functions of the product, classifying them as basic or secondary, determining the cost of each of these, and examining and proposing improvements. The answers to fundamental questions take many forms. A team may find a completely new way to do the job or it may recommend the retention of the old method. Occasionally it will suggest to management that a component, machine or system is uneconomical and should be scrapped.

In the McGill Value Engineering Workshop, the teams tackled such diverse assignments as the simplification of a ring-gate operating mechanism for a huge hydraulic turbine to the improvement of a dishwasher.

### A first for McGill

McGill is the first university in North America to introduce value engineering in co-operation with industry, as part of an academic design course. The teams met at weekly workshops on campus before proceeding to the plant for presentation of their findings.

The results of this unique venture appear to be so successful that plans already exist not only to continue it in the future but to enlarge its scope considerably.

In the words of Professor J.W. Stachiewicz, Chairman of the Mechanical Engineering Department at McGill: "If anybody ever doubted that undergraduate engineering students could sit down with engineers from industry and contribute materially to the solution of industrial problems, he should just take a look at the students' recommendations and the imaginative solution...."