

TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL TRAINING

At its semi-annual meeting in Ottawa recently, the National Technical and Vocational Training Advisory Council was told that approved capital expenditures, under the Federal-Provincial Technical and Vocational Training Agreement, on facilities for new schools, would exceed \$1 billion before the end of the year. The Advisory Council is composed of representatives of employer, labour and professional organizations and provincial bodies directly concerned in developing Canada's labour force.

A report to the Council by the Department of Labour's Training Branch noted that, under the Technical and Vocational Training Agreement, a total of 819 new technical and vocational high schools, trade schools and institutes of technology, or additions to existing facilities, have been built over the past four and a half years. These facilities are providing nearly 300,000 additional training places for students. The total approved expenditure to date is an estimated \$983 million, of which the Federal Government's contribution will amount to \$561 million.

The report said that there are still no signs that the rapid pace of expansion will slacken in the face of mounting needs.

MINISTER EMPHASIZES TRAINING

In thanking members of the Advisory Council for their continuing assistance, Mr. Allan J. MacEachen, the Minister of Labour, underlined the fundamental importance in the nation-wide manpower programme of the many training programmes now under way.

"We are facing critical shortages of manpower to keep our labour market operating effectively," Mr. MacEachen said. "In order to overcome these shortages, trained workers must be provided in larger numbers and in a shorter time than heretofore."

"I think you will agree that this should not be done at the expense of quality in manpower and long-term security in employment. This means that more emphasis will have to be placed on effective training after a man enters the labour force."

The Minister also asked the Advisory Council to consider assisting those who had been "by-passed or left behind in our economic progress" — the unemployed, those with inadequate basic education, and the physically handicapped.

While programmes already existed to help each of these groups, the Minister said, "much more is required, and your consideration of the problems faced by these persons and the techniques and methods best suited to overcoming their employment problems is urgent".

IMMEDIATE ACTION NECESSARY

Mr. George V. Haythorne, Deputy Minister of Labour, in his remarks to the Advisory Council, stressed the importance, in view of developing manpower needs, of retraining workers wherever this can be done within industry during the coming winter.

Labour shortages have already appeared in some critical areas of the economy and may be greater

next spring, said Mr. Haythorne. He suggested "the climate is ripe for action and there is a solid base on which to build" by employers and unions and by provincial and federal levels of government.

During the meeting, members of the Advisory Council noted that the emphasis on technical and vocational training has shifted from the provision of new facilities to ensuring an adequate supply of teaching and administrative staff and suitable curricula for training centres.

IMPORT FIGURES

According to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, imports into Canada during the second quarter of this year continued their upward trend and set the highest record ever reached for a calendar quarter. Their total value amounted to \$2,230,500,000, or 8.9 per cent above the previous record of \$2,047,300,000 attained in the corresponding quarter of 1964. The index of import prices declined somewhat in the second quarter of this year and the average price level for the quarter was approximately 2 per cent lower than for the same three months of 1964. The average index of physical volume of imports, however, was nearly 11 per cent above the average for the second quarter of 1964.

During the first half of 1965, total imports were valued at \$4,071,300,000, a gain of 10 per cent above the arrivals for the first six months of last year. In most months of this year, with the exception of slight declines in January and April, there have been increases in imports over the same month of 1964. The United States remained our principal source of supply during the first six months of this year and 71.7 per cent of all our imports came from that country. Britain provided 7.1 per cent and other Commonwealth and preferential-rate countries 3.9 per cent, both declining approximately 1 per cent in the proportion of goods brought into Canada. The remaining countries supplied 17.3 per cent of all imports, the shares of most trading areas increasing slightly with Western Europe leading and South America alone showing a decline.

CHIEF COMMODITIES

There were sizable gains in the imports of most of the chief commodities, both during the second quarter and in the six-month totals. Industrial machinery was the leading import, showing a gain of 8.1 per cent over machinery arrivals in January to June 1964; motor vehicle parts followed, rising 14 per cent over the first half of last year. In contrast, crude petroleum imports dropped approximately 3 per cent, tractors and parts by 1.5 per cent, and broadwoven fabrics by 2 per cent. Arrivals of aircraft and parts rose by over 60 per cent and passenger automobiles advanced by more than 55 per cent. Non-ferrous metals and alloys increased by a fifth, the rise being chiefly in nickel, tin and copper. Chemicals, steel plate, sheet and strip, electric lighting equipment, plastics, fresh fruits, apparel and fuel oils all showed decided gains during the first six months of 1965.