

Mainland China-During the past year, Canada's exports to Mainland China have been confined almost entirely to shipments of fertilizer, wood pulp, kraft paper and acids; imports into Canada consisted mainly of peanuts, walnuts, fur skins and antimony. Although the China market is difficult to assess, it is estimated that 75 per cent of Chinese requirements are obtained from the Soviet Bloc countries; purchases from Western countries are placed at approximately \$500 million a year. Although this indicates a limited market, there are possibilities for Canadian firms to increase their sales to China.

Singapore and Malaya-Singapore and Malaya are more important to Canada as a source of supply of rubber, tin, palm oil and pepper than as an export outlet for Canadian products. Nevertheless, they offer a good market for flour, paper, asbestos, gas engines, automobiles and parts, and a variety of consumer goods. In the past year, Canadian trade with the area was apparently slightly below 1956, when exports reached \$3.9 million and imports \$28.5 million. Prospects for 1958 are that the combined trade will remain close to the present figure. The Federation of Malaya has become an independent sovereign nation and it is expected that the pattern of trade will shift gradually and that the Federation will do more direct importing and exporting and depend less upon the shipping facilities of Singapore.

British Borneo-Canada carries on a limited trade with the British colonies of North Borneo, Brunei, and Sarawak. This trade - chiefly in machinery, gas engines, and canned foods - is handled almost entirely through Singapore agents. As the development plans for this region progress and increase the demand for imported goods, prospects for Canadian products will no doubt improve.

Burma-Burma is a very small market for Canadian goods and the unfavourable rice crop and decline in foreign exchange reserves may mean further restrictions on imports during 1958. The chances for increasing Canada's business will depend upon whether orders can be obtained under the foreign aid that Burma may receive.

Thailand-Although Thailand buys a wide range of Canadian products, exports in 1957 were dominated by shipments of flour, asbestos fibres, files, and automobiles and parts. The business outlook for 1958 does not appear as bright as in 1957 and this will probably mean a general decline in imports.

South Viet Nam, Cambodia, and Laos-During the past year, there was little if any improvement in economic conditions in South Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos, the former Indochina. The three countries rely mainly upon foreign aid programmes and will apparently do so for a number of years to come. There was some improvement in Canada's exports to this area

during 1957, but the possibility of boosting them further will depend on whether we can participate in the supply of goods for the development programmes.

Indonesia-Statistics show that Canadian exports to Indonesia for 1957 were well above 1956. This was accomplished in the first half of the year but during the last six months of 1957 trade fell drastically, reflecting political and economic difficulties that the country is experiencing. Prospects for an early improvement in trade between the two countries are not bright.

ATTACHES ON TOUR

A group of 29 foreign military attachés, representing 24 countries, have made a week-long tour of defence installations throughout Western Canada, it was announced by National Defence Headquarters.

The party travelled aboard an RCAF North Star transport, and the tour ranged as far west as Victoria, and north to Fort Churchill, Manitoba. They returned to Ottawa Saturday, March 8.

The tour is an annual event, and alternates between Eastern and Western Canada.

The touring group left Uplands airport, Ottawa, for the Canadian Joint Air Training Centre, Rivers, Manitoba, where they remained for two days, inspecting the Training Centre and nearby Camp Shilo. An airdrop demonstration was on the programme at Rivers, and tours of the Royal Canadian School of Artillery and the Canadian Provost Corps School were included in the Shilo visit.

They left Rivers on Tuesday morning March 4 for Fort Churchill for a 24-hour stay. While there they inspected the International Geophysical Year facilities and rode over the barrens in a snow vehicle.

At the RCAF Station Namao, outside Edmonton, the programme included a visit to the Leduc oilfields and to the RCAF School of Survival.

From Edmonton the party went to Victoria, where they visited HMCS Naden, HMC Dockyard, and Royal Roads Canadian Services College.

Returning east, the attachés stopped at Winnipeg, where they toured the RCAF station and the Air Observer School.

HOUSING SPURT

Starts on the construction of new dwelling units rose sharply again in January to 4,521 units from 1,931 in the corresponding month of the preceding year, according to advance figures released by Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Completions were down only slightly at 10,172 units versus 10,249 a year earlier. Owing to the sharp rise in starts, the number of units in various stages of construction at the end of January climbed 12 per cent to