

(C.W.B. December 31, 1948)

## RCAF REVIEWS 1948 WITH SATISFACTION

**R.C.N. NEW ICE-BREAKER:** A contract for building the R.C.N.'s new ice-breaker has been placed with Marine Industries Ltd. of Sorel, P.Q., has been announced by the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton. This is the first contract placed for new ship construction for the Navy since the war.

The announcement was made after consultation with the Hon. Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour and the Hon. Lionel Chevrier, Minister of Transport, who had the advice of the Canadian Maritime Commission. The contract was actually let by the Canadian Commercial Corporation, which operates as purchasing agent for all defence requirements.

Maritime Industries Ltd. is the firm which last year completed building the large train and cargo ferry, "Abegweit", which operates between Cape Tormentine, N.B. and Charlottetown, P.E.I. The "Abegweit" is especially fitted to break through the ice which chokes Northumberland Straits in winter-time.

"The new icebreaker", Mr. Claxton stated, "will be of great value in facilitating the work of the Canadian Navy in northern waters, and will add to Canada's ice-fighting resources. It will be available, provided operational requirements permit, for use in emergencies generally, and is an important addition to Canada's modern fleet."

The vessel will be built along the lines of ships used by the United States Navy and Coast Guard. She will be 269 feet in length, will have a beam of 269 feet 6 inches and will be propelled by Diesel electric machinery of 10,000 horsepower, giving a speed of 16 knots. Her standard displacement will be 5,400 tons. Approximately 13 officers and 159 men will be required to man her.

Mr. Claxton indicated that further contracts for fast escort vessels of a greatly improved type possessed of sufficient speed to cope with any known or anticipated requirements of anti-submarine warfare, would be let as soon as plans are laid and appropriate arrangements can be made.

**TRANS-CANADA HIGHWAY:** The Minister of Mines and Resources, Mr. MacKinnon has announced that since the conclusion of the Conference on the Trans-Canada Highway, he had been in communication with the provincial Ministers concerned. The Provinces are now considering the question of routes within their respective areas and are preparing proposals relating to construction standards and similar matters. When the provincial views on these matters have been clarified and the information forwarded to Ottawa, the federal Government will be in a position to consider the extent of the assistance it should give towards the establishment of the Highway.

**TENDERS ACCEPTED:** On behalf of the Minister of Finance it was announced December 23 that Ten-

ders had been accepted for the full amount of \$75,000,000 Government of Canada Treasury Bills due March 25th, 1949. The average discount price of the accepted bids was \$99.89728 and the average yield was .412%.

**POLISH SECURITIES:** Canadians holding Polish securities issued before September 1, 1939, and not overdue on that date, must register them at a Polish consular office before March 15, 1949, otherwise they will become invalid. The regulations of the Polish Government requiring such registration may be found in the Polish Journal of Laws, Number 22, Item 88.

Registration applies to all stocks, bonds, notes and other evidence of indebtedness, except:

- (a) negotiable securities issued by the State;
- (b) documents issued outside Poland;
- (c) coupons;
- (d) bank notes and other documents payable at sight;
- (e) postal savings books payable to the bearer; and
- (f) documents containing a reservation that they may not be cancelled.

Consular offices of the Polish Government in Canada are located at:

985 Sherbrooke Street West,  
Montreal, P.Q.  
Telephone: Marquette 1217

611 McIntyre Block,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
Telephone: 9-7793

Particulars required by consular offices are the full name, address, signature, nationality and citizenship of bearer, and his declaration stating from whom and when he obtained the document. The documents themselves should be presented to facilitate registration. Securities lost or destroyed between September 1, 1939, and December 17, 1945, may be registered on the basis of an attestation by the last holder giving an exact description of the lost or destroyed documents, including their serial numbers and other pertinent information.

The regulations also provide a procedure for the invalidation of bearer documents lost, destroyed or stolen between September 1, 1939, and December 17, 1945, if application is made before March 15, 1949. An application for invalidation, which is subject to final determination by competent Polish courts, must be accompanied by a full description of the documents together with proof of possession and loss.

Further information concerning registration of documents and procedure to be taken in the event of their loss will be furnished by Polish consular offices in Canada.

**HIGH SPOT - JET FIGHTERS:** Officers and men of the RCAF looked back today over 1948 and saw satisfying results of a reorganization and training programme set in motion during the previous two years. The year past resulted in formation of new flying units, both operational and training, as well as setting up of new ground training facilities. Flying time -- a significant factor in assessing actual air activities -- was approximately double that of 1947. Flying time for 1947 was just under 64,000 hours. In 1948 the RCAF rolled up a total of nearly 113,000 hours (based on estimate for month of December, for which figures are not yet obtainable).

Developments within the Service allowed the re-entry of several hundred veteran aircrew during the year, in addition to normal recruiting intakes. These officers are being employed on flying duties.

The previously-imposed recruiting ceiling was lifted during the summer, and at the end of the year, recruiting was proceeding with no actual ceiling limit in effect.

## STEADY INCREASE

Recruiting for air and ground crew was carried out through 1948, resulting in a steady increase in strength. Estimated total for the year's end (based on estimate for month of December, for which figures are not yet obtainable) stood at 14,000 in contrast with the 11,660 total of 12 months ago.

The Service distinguished itself in numerous operational performances, highlighted by several spectacular Search and Rescue missions, and by the Record chalked up by the two photo survey squadrons, including discovery of two new islands in Canada's Arctic.

High spot of the year to many was the appearance in the skies of the de Havilland Vampires, the RCAF's first operational jet fighters. First of the Vampires arrived in Canada from the United Kingdom late in 1947, and were assembled, test flown, and demonstrated by February. Delivery of the first groups to Auxiliary Fighter Squadrons followed soon after.

The past year saw an acceleration in development work on the twin-engine long-range jet fighter being produced for the RCAF by A.V. Roe, in Toronto. Rapid progress was also made on the engine for this plane. Successful bench tests were held of the first model of the engine, a prototype model to test design. Delivery was completed during 1948 of the big Canadian-built four-engine North Star transports, 23 of which are in operation. In addition to purchase of new aircraft, an extensive programme of reconditioning and converting existing aircraft was continued. One single order covered 209 aircraft at a cost of more than

ten million dollars, and there were many others.

Construction crews were busy at Rivers, Man., and Summerside, P.E.I., where hard surfacing and extension of runways was carried out, to permit operation of heavy aircraft from these two stations. Work was also done on existing buildings at Greenwood, N.S., Edmonton, Aylmer, Ont., Camp Borden, Ont., and numerous other stations, reconditioning and modernizing wartime barracks and other units. Plans were made during the year for extension of facilities at several wartime stations being reactivated, including Mont Joli and Bagotville in Quebec, and Chatham, N.B.

An important step was formation at the new St. Hubert (P.Q.) Operational Training Unit of 410 Fighter Squadron, the first of two jet interceptor squadrons for the Regular RCAF, to be based in Eastern Canada. Under command of Squadron Leader R.A. Kipp, DSO, DFC, famed wartime fighter ace, the squadron began operational training at the St. Hubert OTU December 1. Plans call for the squadron to move to its home base at Mont Joli, P.Q., on completion of its St. Hubert training phase. Formation of the second interceptor squadron, it was announced, will follow in 1949.

## ST. HUBERT OTU

The St. Hubert OTU itself marks an important step towards filling in the framework of the peacetime RCAF. The school is to carry on with its long-term training aspects when the special squadron training ends, taking in classes of "new" aircrew fresh from basic flying schools, converting them to jet aircraft, and instructing them in interceptor air defence operations. Flying at the OTU is done on Vampires.

Addition of two more Auxiliary Squadrons during 1948 brought the total to 10, the two latest being in Calgary and London. Those previously activated include Montreal (2), Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Vancouver. Of these, five are equipped with the Vampires, and conversion to jet planes by Auxiliary pilots was carried out during the year, in addition to normal training activities. Announced late in the year was a special one-year training programme for aircrew members of the Auxiliary. Under this plan, selected Auxiliary members are given a year's training at the RCAF's Flying Training School, Centralia, Ont., after which they receive their pilot wings and a commission. They will then return to civilian life and carry on with further training at the Auxiliary Squadron to which they belonged. A similar plan for ground-crew members of Auxiliary Squadrons is being explored.