

(C.W.B. March 4, 1949)

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A second report entitled, "Supply of Building Materials in Canada - Outlook 1949", also tabled in Parliament indicates that the total supply of primary iron and steel available from domestic production and from imports may be a little larger in 1949 than in the previous year. At the same time expected purchases of machinery and equipment may show a moderate decline in real terms. This suggests some easing in the shortage of this material even though supplies will likely continue to fall short of overall demands. Further improvements in the availability of special types and grades of lumber is expected this year.

Of the 30 building materials covered in the survey, increased production is expected for 21, little change for 6 and lower production for 3. In spite of greater output in most instances, shortages are likely to continue with respect to various iron and steel products including bath tubs, sinks and wash basins, furnaces and radiators, steel pipe and fittings and nails; and also with respect to certain other materials such as cement and clay and gypsum products. However, the output levels foreseen conform reasonably well with the changing pattern of construction requirements and should be generally adequate for the moderately larger volume of construction planned.

Having regard to the improved position with respect to material supplies, and also with respect to labour, the investment report concludes that full realization of the capital expenditure program can be anticipated.

If the program is realized, outlay on capital goods in 1949 would comprise about a fifth of the value of gross national products which is about the same proportion as in the previous year. Thus, to the extent that the expanding investment requirements have contributed to inflation in recent years, this influence evidently is levelling off in 1949. Nevertheless the maintenance of real investment at the unusually high level achieved in 1948 will be an important sustaining influence in the economy throughout the year.

The reports were prepared by the Economic Research and Development Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce with assistance from the Bureau of Statistics and other agencies.

VISITORS FROM PERU: According to C. J. Van Tighem, Commercial Secretary to the Canadian Embassy in Peru a large number of business visitors from that country is expected to visit the Canadian International Trade Fair in Toronto, Canada, May 30 to June 10. He has written asking for 100 application forms for hotel accommodation during the period of the Trade Fair.

Last Year Peru was represented at the Trade Fair in the leather goods section.

GOVERNMENT FINANCING: On behalf of the Minister of Finance, Mr. Abbott, it was announced on March 1 that an issue of Government of Canada Deposit Certificates in the amount of \$100,000,000 dated March 4, 1949 due September 2, 1949, and bearing interest at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1% per annum, has been sold to the chartered banks at par. The proceeds of this issue will be used to retire an equal amount of $\frac{5}{8}$ Deposit Certificates which mature on that date.

It was also announced that arrangements have been made for the purchase at par by the Bank of Canada of an issue of \$550,000,000 Government of Canada Treasury Notes dated March 1, 1949 due September 1, 1949, and bearing interest at the rate of $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1% per annum. The proceeds of this issue are being used to redeem Treasury Notes of like amount bearing interest at $\frac{5}{8}$ of 1% per annum which matured March 1.

OFFICER EXCHANGE: Major E.W.H. Berwick, 40, of Calgary, has been selected for attachment to the Australian Military Forces on an exchange basis, Army Headquarters announced on March 3. He has been promoted acting lieutenant-colonel.

Coming to Canada in exchange is Lt.-Col. H.G. Bates of the Australian Army, who is expected to arrive at Halifax on March 11. He will be attached to the General Staff branch at Army Headquarters and employed in the Directorate of Military Training.

Lt.-Col. Berwick and his wife, Lady Elizabeth Berwick, sailed February 16 from Saint John, N.B., for the United Kingdom, on their way to Australia.

RADIO SALES LOWER: Producers' sales of radio receiving sets in November decreased almost 31 per cent from the preceding year and were 32 per cent lower in the 11 months ending November, according to the Bureau of Statistics. In the month, sales were lower in all provinces except Saskatchewan and Alberta, while in the cumulative period, the decline was common to all provinces.

Sales during November amounted to 79,427 units as compared with 114,933 a year earlier. During the first 11 months of 1948, producers' sales totalled 506,567 units as against 747,136 in the similar period of 1947.

COMMEMORATION STAMP: The Postmaster General, Mr. Bertrand announced that the Department is planning to issue a 4-cent postage stamp to commemorate the entry of Newfoundland into Confederation with Canada when the Governments of Canada, Newfoundland and the United Kingdom ratify the union.

Details relating to the design of the stamp will be announced as soon as appropriate.

FEED GRAIN EASIER: With 1948 production of coarse grains in most of the country and particularly in the central provinces at higher levels than in 1947, the current crop year to date has been generally featured by a fairly easy domestic feed-grain supply situation, states the Canadian Coarse Grains quarterly review by the Bureau of Statistics.

So far, a larger proportion of all the 1948 coarse grain crops has been retained on farms than was the case in 1947. In addition to western oats and barley marketed to February 10, it is estimated that some 29 million bushels of oats and 16.5 million of barley remain on western farms to be marketed before the close of the crop year. Fodder supplies are reported to be generally adequate throughout the country, with surpluses indicated in some areas.

Reflecting both decreased marketings and increased exports as compared with the previous crop year, visible supplies of oats and barley at February 10 were down sharply from the commercial supply position in the same date a year ago. Visible oat supplies at 16.7 million bushels were nearly 15 million below last year's level, while visible barley stocks at 20.2 million bushels were down more than 13 million bushels from a year ago. The drop in commercial supplies between the two dates is common to nearly all positions with the exception of United States ports, where stocks held amounted to 2.8 million bushels of oats and 1.5 million of rye as against none a year earlier.

RYE, FLAX SUPPLIES

Commercial supplies of rye and flax are much higher than last year. On February 10, Canadian visible rye stocks totalled 9.2 million bushels as against 0.9 million at the same time last year. Flax supplies of 11.4 million bushels were also up considerably from last year's 6.6 million bushels. Commercial rye stocks were divided about evenly among country elevators, Lakehead terminals and other positions.

Farmers' marketings of both oats and barley in the Prairie Provinces from August 1 to February 10 of the current crop year were below those of the comparable period of 1947-48. During the period, marketings of oats amounted to 56.2 million bushels, 1.3 million below last year's level, while deliveries of barley at 50.9 million were 5.6 million bushels below last year's figure. Marketings of rye and flaxseed for the period totalled 13.3 million and 13.0 million bushels, exceeding those of last year by 3.8 million and 3.7 million bushels, respectively. During the current crop year, Saskatchewan has led in the marketing of oats, Alberta in barley and rye, and Manitoba in flaxseed.

With the removal of export restrictions on coarse grains, there has been a fairly substantial movement of both oats and barley into export channels. During the first six months

of the current crop year, exports of oats as grain amounted to 12.3 million bushels, all but 1.3 million bushels of which went to the United States. Custom exports of rolled oats and oatmeal in terms of oats for the same period amounted to 1.2 million bushels. Barley exports totalled 13.5 million bushels, with the United States taking 5.8 million of the total. Other imports of Canadian barley during the period were the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium and Norway, each of which received in excess of one million bushels. Exports of rye and flaxseed for the six months totalled 4.5 million and 2.9 million bushels, respectively.

COMBAT ARTHRITIS: Substantial financial assistance from the federal health grants this year will go to the work of the Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Martin, announced on March 4.

This organization is now planning a nationwide program of professional and public education on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the various forms of arthritis and rheumatism and the promotion of more adequate facilities for the cure of these ailments.

Mr. Martin pointed out that the provinces are allotting one per cent of the grant available to them for general public health services under the federal Health Plan to assist the Arthritis and Rheumatism Society. All the provinces have made the grant except Manitoba, which is expected to announce its decision within a few days. British Columbia contributed \$19,100, or about five per cent of its public health grant, directly to the provincial division of the society for the establishment of clinical facilities to supply investigation and medical care, and an additional \$20,000 to the national society to aid its research and educational programs.

FARM WAGES HIGHER: Average wages for male farm help in most provinces and for Canada as a whole were moderately higher at the middle of January this year than 12 months earlier, according to reports received by the Bureau of Statistics from farm correspondents in all parts of Canada. Generally, however, the increase was less than between mid-January 1946 and 1947.

With board provided by the employers, the average farm wage-rate per day for all Canada was \$4.04 at January 15 as compared with \$3.62 at the same date in 1948 and \$3.23 in 1947. By provinces, rates ranged from \$2.94 in Prince Edward Island to \$5.57 in British Columbia, and were higher than in January, 1948 in all provinces except Nova Scotia. Without board, the average daily rate for all Canada was \$4.97 against \$4.66 a year earlier and \$4.15 in 1947, rates being somewhat below 1948 levels in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick only.