

CANAL FREIGHT TRAFFIC: Volume of freight transported through the 11 Canadian canals increased 14.7 per cent in 1956 to 40,016,565 tons from 34,874,198 tons in 1955, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics annual report on canal traffic. Among the more important increases in cargo carried were wheat, corn, oats, barley, bituminous coal, iron ore, crude petroleum and fuel oil.

Tonnage of freight locked through the St. Lawrence canals climbed 17.9 per cent to 13,499,698 tons from 11,446,620 tons in 1955, Welland Ship 10.4 per cent to 23,066,261 tons from 20,893,572, and Sault Ste. Marie 35.8 per cent to 2,989,278 tons from 2,201,075. Volume of freight moved through the Canso Canal in its first full year of operation amounted to 68,395 tons. Of the smaller canals, traffic was heavier on the Ottawa River, Richelieu River, and Trent canals but lighter on the Rideau, Murray, St. Andrew's, and St. Peter's canals.

Number of vessel passages rose 16.7 per cent to 32,865 from 28,172 in the preceding year and the registered net tonnage 10.2 per cent to 36,022,936 tons from 32,685,154. On a registered net tonnage basis, Canadian vessels constituted 86 per cent of all ships passing through the canals in 1956 compared to 85 per cent in 1955.

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CHEMICAL INDUSTRY THRIVES: The high level of industrial activity in Canada in 1956 provided the impetus to push production levels in the chemicals and allied products group of industries to new record levels. Factory shipments at \$1,112,600,000 were \$68,500,000 or 6.6 per cent over the 1955 total of \$1,044,100,000 and there appears to be no sign, certainly not from the evidence presented last year, that the chemical industry's post-war growth pattern is slowing down, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

In 1956 there were 1,120 operating establishments in this group (1,126 in 1955), and they employed 52,500 persons (51,900) who were paid \$199,600,000 in salaries and wages (\$185,300,000). Materials for use in manufacturing cost \$518,000,000 (\$480,000,000) and fuel and electricity cost about \$36,000,000 (\$33,000,000).

Leaders of the chemical industries in advance of the general trend of the chemical group in 1956 were compressed gases with an increase of 26.2 per cent in the factory value of shipments, medicinal and pharmaceutical preparations 12.8 per cent, heavy chemicals 11.8 per cent and primary plastics 10.1 per cent. The only industries to show declines were the fertilizer industry which fell 10.5 per cent and vegetable oils 15.7 per cent. Increases for other groups: coal tar distillation, 9 per cent; paints, 8.3 per cent; soaps, 9.2 per cent; toilet preparations, 3.4 per cent; inks, 7.1 per cent; adhesives, 7.8 per

cent; polishes, 4.6 per cent; and miscellaneous chemicals, 7.3 per cent.

The target for capital expenditures by the chemical industry on new plants and for machinery and equipment was set at \$138,300,000 in 1957, an increase of 12.5 per cent over an actual investment of \$122,900,000 in 1956 for the same purpose. The magnitude of this programme along with the substantial additions to chemical plant productive capacity over the past seven years reflects a determination on the part of the Canadian chemical industry to keep abreast of the rest of the world in the development of production and process technology.

Imports of chemicals, at \$288,600,000 in 1956, were 10.8 per cent higher than the comparable total of \$260,500,000 recorded in 1955. This was not unexpected as the demand for all materials to satisfy the requirements of a growing economy continued unabated. A similar situation obtained abroad and, as a result, export trade in chemicals reached a new high of \$228,600,000, an increase of 8.9 per cent over the \$210,000,000 exported in 1955.

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WHOOPEES HOPING: Big news in bird land. The Canadian Wildlife Service reports that nine whooping cranes have been spotted from the air at the birds' nesting grounds in the Sass River area of Wood Buffalo National Park, the 17,300 square miles of wilderness sanctuary straddling the boundary of northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Five of the whoopers, reports wildlife biologist N.S. Novakowski, appear to be sitting on nests "either hatching or brooding". Nine is the largest number ever seen at the nesting grounds so early in the year.

This is the best news of the whoopers to come out of Wood Buffalo National Park since the nesting grounds were first discovered there in 1954 by biologist W.A. Fuller of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Last year, at this time only one nesting bird had been observed, and in 1955, only three pairs had been spotted by the month of June. Throughout the summer biologists of the Federal Resources Department will continue to keep the nesting grounds under periodic observation.

Out of the present surviving flock of twenty nine birds, twenty four are wild while three adults, crippled in flight, and two young are in the New Orleans and San Antonio Zoos.

The discovery of the Wood Buffalo nesting grounds was a major event. For thirty two years the site of the nesting grounds had been one of the deep mysteries of the bird world. Though Wood Buffalo is known to be one of the areas chosen by the cranes, ornithologists do not believe that these are the only nesting grounds in northern Canada. They do not think that the mystery has been fully solved and will continue the search this summer.