

IMPORT RESTRICTIONS RELAXED

Mr. Gordon Churchill, Minister of Trade and Commerce, has announced that the Australian Government has taken further major steps towards the relaxation of import restrictions and the elimination of dollar discrimination.

Effective August 1, 1959, the yearly ceiling on total Australian imports will be increased to £850 million (Australian) from £800 million (Australian). Discriminatory controls against the dollar area have been removed on imports of all goods with the exception of motor vehicles and lumber.

Mr. Churchill warmly welcomed this latest removal of discrimination against the dollar area which is in keeping with one of the principal objectives agreed upon at the Commonwealth Trade and Economic Conference last September. He expressed the hope that Australia would soon be able to remove the remaining discrimination on dollar area motor vehicles and lumber commodities which are of particular interest to Canada.

Immediately prior to the Commonwealth Conference, Australia removed the discrimination on capital equipment and electrical apparatus. Subsequently, in December 1958, and in April 1959, synthetic rubber, chemicals, and a wide range of essential industrial requirements were added to the list of goods subject to global licence. With this latest move over ninety per cent of Australia's import requirements from all countries are free of discrimination.

Mr. Churchill stated that the change in Australian import controls substantially increased opportunities for expanding and diversifying Canadian sales in the Australian market, particularly of manufactured goods, which have been severely restricted by import controls during much of the post-war period. He encouraged Canadian exporters to explore fully the possibilities of increasing sales.

Complete details concerning the licensing treatment to be accorded to specific items of interest to Canadian exporters are not yet available. It is understood, however, that motor vehicle parts, hand tools not made in Australia, synthetic fibres, nickel and alloys, synthetic sausage casings, outboard motors (30 horse-power and over), welding rods, whisky, magnesite brick, transparent cellulose film, and paper-makers' felt and wire will now be licensed on a world import replacement plan. Hog casings have been exempted from the licensing requirements.

Canned salmon and sardines, fine papers, apples, roller and ball bearings, and stainless steel will be subject to world quota

licences. Quotas for these goods have been increased by ten per cent over the previous licensing period.

Dollar ceilings of £5,000 per importer per licensing period have been established for floor coverings, refrigerators and wall-papers. Dollar area textiles will be subject to a ceiling of £25,000 per importer per licensing period.

Total Canadian exports to Australia in 1958 amounted to approximately \$53 million as compared with \$49 million during the previous year. The principal Canadian exports are canned fish, lumber, wood pulp, newsprint, iron and steel products, office machines, motor vehicles, aluminum, asbestos fibres, abrasive papers and drugs and chemicals.

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SHIP TO BELGIUM

HMCS *Winnipeg*, an Algerine class coastal escort, was transferred to the Government of Belgium under the Canadian programme of Mutual Aid to member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The ceremony took place at Esquimalt, B.C., on August 7.

Mr. George R. Pearkes, V.C., Minister of National Defence, handed over the ship officially to His Excellency Arthur Gilson, Minister of Defence for Belgium, who accepted the ship on behalf of his country.

Mr. Gilson was visiting Canada for the first time and saw something of Canada's defence effort.

Among the guests in attendance at this ceremony were: His Excellency Jacques de Thier, Belgian Ambassador to Canada; Commodore L.J.J. Robins, Chief of the Belgian Naval Staff; Mr. Leon Balcer, Solicitor General of Canada; Rear Admiral K.L. Dyer, Chief of Naval Personnel, who represented the Canadian Chief of the Naval Staff.

The *Winnipeg*, which was built by the Port Arthur Shipbuilding Company, was first commissioned on July 29, 1943, and served for the remainder of the Second World War. This ship, along with HMCS *Wallaceburg*, another Algerine class coastal escort which was transferred to the Belgian Navy at Sydney, N.S., on July 31, was employed on convoy escort duty during the Second World War. Following the end of hostilities, the *Winnipeg* sailed from Halifax to Esquimalt, where she became part of the reserve fleet. She has been refitted for modern service by Yarrows Limited, of Victoria, at a cost of more than \$1 million. The ship will be commanded by Lieutenant de Vaisseau E. Poulet, of the Royal Belgian Navy, and is being renamed F.N.B. *Dufour*.