

(C.W.B. September 16, 1949)

WAR MEDALS DISTRIBUTION: Distribution of campaign stars and medals to the more than one million members of the Canadian armed forces and Merchant Navy who served during World War II will commence about October 1, the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Gregg, announced on September 10. The distribution will involve a total of approximately 3,100,000 stars and medals with an additional 524,000 clasps signifying at least sixty days service outside Canada.

The Minister explained that in the vast majority of cases it will be necessary for the veterans to apply for their medals. To facilitate the application special postage free cards will be placed in all Canadian post offices. These cards will also be available in all branches of the Canadian Legion.

"The reason for this is that we do not have up-to-date addresses for thousands of veterans," Mr. Gregg said. "There are many thousands who have gone quietly back into civilian life and who have not been in contact with the department since their discharge. As a result we must have these applications in order to have accurate addresses."

MERCHANT SEAMEN

Merchant Seamen and ex-members of the Merchant Navy will apply to the Department of Transport, Ottawa, submitting with their application their certificate of discharge or their continuous certificate of discharge book. From this, the Department of Transport will decide entitlement and forward the medals earned.

Members of the permanent force, however, will receive their decorations through the Department of National Defence without any application being necessary, while certain of the reserve units will receive theirs in a similar manner under arrangements already completed.

Mr. Gregg made it clear, also, that the next of kin of deceased veterans will be eligible to receive the stars and medals which would have been awarded to the veteran had he not died.

"There will be no necessity for applications from the next of kin of veterans who died on active service or as a result of a service connected disability," Mr. Gregg said. "The Department has accurate addresses for these people. However the official next of kin of those who have died since discharge of a non-service disability should make application in the same way as the veteran."

All told the Department will be distributing a total of eleven stars and medals. Widest distribution is, of course, the War Medal 1939-45 which was awarded to all members of the forces with 28 days service. A total of 1,060,000 of these have been ordered. Next in importance is the Canadian Volunteer Service Medal of which approximately 900,000 will be

distributed. To 524,000 recipients of this medal will go clasps signifying at least sixty days service outside Canada.

The other medals and stars to be distributed are as follows: Defence Medal, 460,000; 1939-45 star, 288,000; France and Germany Star 250,000; Italy Star, 102,000; Atlantic Star, 40,000; Africa Star, 12,000; Pacific Star, 10,825 and Burma Star 5,200. In addition 25,870 clasps to stars will be awarded.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING UP: Residential building construction was at a high level of activity in the first six months of 1949, completions showing a gain of 30 per cent over the same period of last year, and starts a smaller increase, according to survey estimates by the Bureau of Statistics.

The number of dwelling units completed in the period was 39,726 as against the cumulative total of 30,528 for the first half of 1948, while the starts totalled 40,199 as compared with 39,768 a year earlier. The estimated number under construction at the end of June was 56,787, slightly higher than the 56,456 at the beginning of the year.

Continuing the gains of earlier months this year completions in June rose to 7,275 units from 5,946 in the corresponding month last year. Starts were fewer in number in the month, totalling 10,528 as compared with 13,409.

Ontario completed the largest number of dwelling units during the first six months this year, totalling 14,059 as compared with 11,784 in the like period of 1948, followed by Quebec with 10,756 units compared with 7,688, British Columbia 4,905 (4,543 in 1948), Prairie Provinces 7,693 (5,008), and the Maritime Provinces 2,313 (1,505).

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION: Agricultural production in Canada in 1948 was higher than in the preceding year, but was down somewhat from the all-time high reached in 1942, according to the first release of a new series of index numbers of agricultural production by the Bureau of Statistics.

The index of farm production in 1948, on the base 1935-39=100, was calculated at 125.2 as compared with 115.8 in 1947, the gain being accounted for by the increased production of grains, potatoes, tobacco and vegetables which more than offset declines registered by the other commodities.

The high point of the index was 164.2 in 1942. This high level was due in large part to extremely large crops of grain and the wartime expansion of the livestock industry which by that time was well under way. The low point occurred in 1937, when the index dropped to 83.7, largely as a result of extremely small grain crops, particularly in Saskatchewan.

MODERNIZE DESTROYERS: The first major phase of a modernization programme for destroyers of the Royal Canadian Navy is near completion and the next three months will see an entire change-over of operational destroyers in the fleet, it was announced on September 9 by the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton.

Three Tribal class destroyers -- H.M.C. Ships "Huron", "Cayuga" and "Micmac" -- and the Fleet class destroyer "Sioux", which have been undergoing rearmament in yards on the two coasts, are to return to active commission. "Huron" and "Micmac" will be based at Halifax and "Cayuga" and "Sioux" at Esquimalt.

They will replace H.M.C. Destroyers "Nootka", "Haida", "Athabaskan" and "Crescent", which are to be paid off into reserve. "Nootka", "Haida" and "Athabaskan", all Tribal class ships, will be taken in hand for refit and re-equipment, as will H.M.C.S. "Iroquois", a ship of the same class, which was brought into active commission this summer to assist with the Reserve sea training programme. She had served previously as depot ship for the Reserve Fleet at Halifax.

Pursuant with the Naval policy of constantly seeking to improve living conditions on board ship, while still maintaining the highest standard of fighting efficiency, extensive and radical alterations have been made to the crew's living quarters in H.M.C.S. "Sioux".

A cafeteria messing system and dining quarters separate from the sleeping accommodation have been introduced, while in the sleeping spaces hammocks have been replaced by bunks which will fold when not in use.

Although the cafeteria and bunk systems are not uncommon in larger ships, this will be the first time they have been employed in toto in a destroyer of either the Canadian or British Navies, and the experiment will be watched with a great deal of interest.

Whether these systems or modifications of them will be adopted in the other destroyers of the R.C.N. will depend on the success of the tests to be carried out in H.M.C.S. "Sioux" under practical sea-going conditions.

WHEAT AND FLOUR EXPORTS: Canada's 1948-49 crop year exports of wheat and wheat flour in terms of wheat amounted to 231,600,000 bushels, an increase of 36,600,000 bushels over the 1947-48 total, according to the monthly review of the wheat situation by the Bureau of Statistics. Exports of wheat as grain amounted to 183,400,000 bushels, an increase of almost 50,000,000 over the 1947-48 total but exports of flour in terms of wheat, at 48,200,000 bushels, showed a decrease of 13,300,000 from the preceding crop year.

While the 1948-49 exports were considerably higher than in the preceding year, they are somewhat below the 10-year average of 248,900,000 bushels. In the three years, 1943-44 through 1945-46, exports exceeded 340,000,000 bushels, a relatively high level for Canadian

wheat and wheat flour. The all-time record for exports of Canadian wheat and wheat flour was set in 1928-29 when the total reached 407,600,000 bushels.

The United Kingdom continues to be Canada's chief outlet for wheat and flour exports, receiving approximately two-thirds of the 1948-49 total. Exports of Canadian wheat as grain to the United Kingdom totalled 128,700,000 bushels, while exports of flour, in terms of wheat equivalent, totalled 23,900,000 bushels.

Other important purchasers of Canadian wheat as grain during 1948-49 were India with 11,300,000 bushels, British South Africa 7,400,000, Switzerland 5,600,000, and Belgium 5,000,000. More than 30 crown colonies and foreign countries accounted for the balance, with individual totals ranging from a few bushels to more than a million.

In addition to the shipments to the United Kingdom, exports of flour to the equivalent of at least 1,000,000 bushels of wheat were made to each of the following: Philippine Islands, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Italy, Venezuela, Jamaica and Newfoundland (prior to the union with Canada). Almost 70 other crown colonies and foreign countries also purchased Canadian wheat flour in varying amounts.

RAILWAY REVENUES UP: Operating revenues of Canadian railways for June totalled \$71,106,318, a gain of 3.4 per cent or \$2,360,899 over June last year. Reflecting fare increases, passenger revenues climbed 11.8 per cent from \$7,357,800 to \$8,224,775. Freight revenues aggregated \$54,379,456 against \$53,642,594 one year earlier, an increase of 1.4 per cent. Mail, express and other passenger train receipts improved 5.4 per cent, 8.2 per cent, and 16.2 per cent, respectively.

Operating expenses began to show some tendency to forced economies and were reduced for the first month this year from 1948 levels. The total at \$68,525,794 for June represented a decrease of 3.2 per cent or \$2,281,733 from June last year. Maintenance of way and structures declined 13.8 per cent or \$2,369,030, but equipment maintenance rose 7.4 per cent or by \$1,090,664. Transportation expenses eased 3.7 per cent to \$31,522,652 from \$32,733,542, while general expenses rose 9.6 per cent to \$3,717,812.

EMPLOYMENT INCREASE: Canada's civilian labour force continues to grow. In June this year it reached an estimated total of 5,121,000, an increase of 91,000 over a year earlier and 209,000 over two years earlier, according to the quarterly survey by the Bureau of Statistics. The June total compares with a previous peak shown by the Bureau surveys of 5,109,000 at the beginning of September last year.