

NEW RAILWAY LINE: The first station name to be chosen for the Canadian National Railways new 23-mile line now under construction in New Brunswick is "Heath Steele". The announcement was made by R.G. Hayes, vice-president and general manager of the CNR's Atlantic Region.

Heath Steele commemorates the name of the mine to be served by the new branch line which will run west from Bartibog, near Newcastle, on the CNR's Montreal-Halifax main line.

Work on the new line began last September when Modern Construction Limited of Moncton started the big job of bulldozing and blasting a 100-foot-wide swath through the rugged New Brunswick hinterland.

Before the big job is completed by the end of 1957, more than 1,000,000 cubic yards of earth and rock will be excavated, 350,000 of fill and ballast installed and 3,317 lineal feet of drainage pipe laid.

Traffic on the new railway line will consist principally of concentrates, estimated at 120,000 tons annually, moving through Newcastle, Saint John, Halifax and possibly other ports. Forest products are also expected to be shipped in large quantities.

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PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL: Hon. Milton F. Gregg, Minister of Labour, has announced publication of the fifth report on a 1956 survey of requirements for professionally trained personnel in Canada.

The survey, which is conducted every two years, by the Labour Department's Economics and Research Branch in co-operation with the Unemployment Insurance Commission, showed that 50 per cent of industrial employers reported shortages of professional personnel. The effects of these shortages on their operations was described by the reporting employers. The five effects most frequently mentioned were curtailment of production and expansion plans, curtailment of development and research activity, over-loading of present personnel potential shortage of future executives, and the necessity of filling positions with inadequately trained personnel.

Coverage of this biennial survey included a large sample of industrial firms, and reports from federal and provincial government departments and agencies, and from universities and colleges. The organizations surveyed employed a total of 30,200 professional persons.

The reports from employers included estimates of their future requirements for some 20 different categories of professional workers for each of the years, 1956, 1957 and 1958 together with indications of the reasons for recruitment difficulties of professional workers. Information was also sought on the undesirable effects of professional manpower shortages and an indication of the main sources from which Canadian employers recruit professional people.

The report indicates a substantial increase in expected requirements for engineers and scientists in the three years 1956, 1957 and 1958 as compared with the period 1954 to 1956. The need for an increasing number of professional persons is particularly characteristic of industrial firms, but is also marked in governments and universities as well.

According to the results of the study, the average net increase in industrial employment opportunities for engineering professions was expected by employers to be 12.2 per cent each year from 1956 to 1958. This compares with 7.6 per cent forecast in 1954 for the 1954-56 period. In the science professions (biology, chemistry, geology, mathematics and physics) the increase expected for 1956-1958 was also 12.2 per cent as compared to a 9.2 per cent increase in job opportunities forecast in 1954 for the years 1954-56. In the other professions reported on by employers, a substantial increase in demand was also expected.

In industry, 61 per cent of the firms surveyed reported difficulties in the recruitment of professional staff during 1954 and 1955. About 85 per cent of the government departments and agencies and 90 per cent of the reporting colleges and universities reported difficulties in professional recruitment during 1955.

Canadians with professional experience were found to be the major source of professional personnel since 83 per cent of industrial employers surveyed reported that they recruited from this source. Of this number, 61 per cent claimed that the majority of professional personnel they hired were experienced Canadian professionals.

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FINANCIAL STANDING: The Hon. Walter Harris, Minister of Finance, has announced that budgetary revenues for December were \$414.6 million, expenditures were \$441.1 million, and the deficit was \$26.5 million. A year ago, revenues for December were \$372.6 million, expenditures were \$422.1 million and the deficit was \$49.5 million.

For the first nine months of the fiscal year ending March 31, 1957, budgetary revenues were \$3,639.5 million, expenditures were \$3,278.4 million and the surplus was \$361.1 million. For the same period in 1955-56, revenues were \$3,086.6 million, expenditures were \$3,030.5 million and the surplus was \$56.1 million.

Operations of the old age security fund, which are not included in budgetary transactions, resulted in a deficit of \$4.4 million for December 1956, and a cumulative deficit of \$22.4 million for the nine months to December 31, 1956. Last year the cumulative deficit for the same nine months was \$45.6 million. These deficits were covered by temporary loans by the Minister under the terms of the Old Age Security Act.