

FIRST CANADIAN-OWNED CARRIER

HMCS Bonaventure, the Royal Canadian Navy's first Canadian-owned aircraft carrier, will commission at Belfast, Northern Ireland, on January 17 of next year.

Her aircraft will be the Banshee jet fighter and the Canadian-built anti-submarine Tracker. Helicopters also will be carried for plane guard duties.

Operation of the Banshee and the Tracker will be assisted by the Bonaventure's up-to-date installations and equipment which include the angled deck, the steam catapult and stabilized deck-landing mirror aids.

The number and type of aircraft operating from the carrier will vary from time to time according to her operational or exercise role.

The Bonaventure is a light fleet class carrier. She has a riveted steel hull and main bulkheads. To reduce topweight, aluminum is being used where practicable in the superstructure and most of her secondary bulkhead will be of marine panelling.

She has twin-shaft steam turbines and will displace approximately 19,000 tons fully loaded. She is 700 feet long, with a beam of 80 feet, excluding the angled deck.

Her gunnery armament will include the latest anti-aircraft guns and fire control equipment.

Radar equipment is being installed for full coverage of fighting requirements, as well as navigational purposes. A closed television system for inter-ship communication will be tested experimentally on board.

The main electrical power generated in the ship will be direct current up to 3,200 kilowatts, developed by four turbine-driven generators and four diesel-driven generators. There will also be approximately 300 kilowatts of alternating current power catering mainly to the electronics system.

Internal communications (except for the television) will be normal for this class of ship. Fluorescent lighting will be used in many places including the pilots' briefing room.

Flight deck lighting will represent the latest developments for night flying operations.

Canadian standard habitability has been built into the vessel which will carry a complement of nearly 1,200 officers and men, including aircrew and aircraft maintenance personnel. The crew will sleep in bunks and be fed cafeteria-style.

Her Tracker anti-submarine aircraft are the Canadian-produced CS2F1's. The de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd. delivered the first of these this fall. Target figure for the Tracker is 100, and production will continue at the rate of approximately two a month until mid-1960.

Of the 39 Banshee jet fighters on order, one squadron already is in service at HMCS Shearwater, the RCN Air Station near Dartmouth, N.S. Delivery of the balance of these radar-equipped all-weather planes is expected to be completed by mid-1957.

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RETAIL SALES SOAR: Retail sales in Canada reached an all-time high during 1955 when they were estimated to be valued at \$13,111,895,000, according to final figures released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. This was an increase of 8.7 per cent over the preceding year's sales total of \$12,065,758,000. All provinces except Saskatchewan and all specified kind-of-business groups shared in the sales advance.

Among the provinces British Columbia had the largest proportionate sales increase of 13 per cent. Ontario was next in order with an increase of 10.4 per cent, followed by the Atlantic provinces with 9.9 per cent, Alberta and Quebec with 7.4 per cent each, and Manitoba 5.1 per cent. The decline in Saskatchewan was 1.4 per cent.

Motor vehicle dealers, which accounted for 18 per cent of total sales, registered the largest increase of 16.8 per cent. Garages and filling stations, the furniture and appliance and radio group, and lumber and building material dealers also showed significant increases of 13.5 per cent, 11.3 per cent, and 11 per cent, respectively. Grocery and combination stores and department stores, account-

ing for over 25 per cent of total sales, had increases of 6.6 per cent and 8.4 per cent, respectively.

Sales totals for the top 10 trades in 1955 were as follows, values for 1954 being in brackets: grocery and combination stores, \$2,429,581,000 (\$2,279,402,000 in 1954); motor vehicle dealers, \$2,370,062,000 (\$2,028,751,000); department stores, \$1,150,546,000 (\$1,061,676,000); other food and beverages, \$949,570,000 (\$924,570,000); garages and filling stations, \$717,878,000 (\$632,252,000); furniture, appliance and radio dealers, \$540,546,000 (\$485,790,000); general stores, \$529,757,000 (\$514,959,000); restaurants, \$467,611,000 (\$452,554,000); lumber and building material dealers, \$450,661,000 (\$406,174,000); and drug stores, \$300,341,000 (\$281,810,000).

Provincial sales totals follow: Atlantic Provinces, \$1,127,112,000 (\$1,025,222,000 in 1954); Quebec, \$3,005,671,000 (\$2,797,617,000); Ontario, \$5,115,239,000 (\$4,634,450,000); Manitoba, \$669,254,000 (\$637,044,000); Saskatchewan, \$747,985,000 (\$758,295,000); Alberta, \$1,034,995,000 (\$963,630,000); and British Columbia, including the Yukon and Northwest Territories, \$1,411,640,000 (\$1,249,499,000).