

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

Canada's seasonally-adjusted index of industrial production (1949 = 100) advanced by 0.8 per cent in December last, to close out the year at a record level of 221.5. This advance meant that the total 1964 index was higher by 8.6 per cent than in 1963, with the gain being considerably in excess of the long-term growth rate. In December, the total increase was composed of gains of about 1 per cent and 6 per cent in manufacturing and electric-power and gas utilities, respectively, with a decline of about 1 per cent in mining production.

NON-DURABLES

There were some unusually large increases in non-durables in December, which brought this aggregate up by 1.8 per cent. For example, foods and beverages, influenced by large gains in both meat products and distilleries, rose by 4 per cent. Both clothing and rubber products recorded increases in excess of 5 per cent. Smaller gains occurred in leather, paper and chemical products, the latter two apparently, at least in part, owing to the winter-housing bonus scheme and the pending imposition of the final stage of the building-materials sales tax at the end of 1964, which affected roofing paper and paint production. Elsewhere, there were production declines in textiles, printing and publishing, and petroleum refining.

DURABLES

A decline of 0.9 per cent in durables was registered in December, the larger influence being a sharp drop in motor-vehicle and parts production, which reflected a major labour disturbance in the industry. January's level will be substantially higher than this strike-affected December low in motor vehicles. Wood products also showed a large decline in December, reflecting lower sawmilling output, mostly, it seems, owing to severe weather conditions on the West Coast. All other major groups in durables showed relatively large gains in December - in particular iron and steel (+3 per cent) and non-metallic mineral products (+12 per cent); primary iron and steel, with one of its largest gains (+6 per cent) in several months, broke new ground, to lead the former while, in the latter, gains were large and widespread in most components, reflecting the high level of construction activity in the fourth quarter. Non-ferrous metal products and electrical apparatus and supplies were up by 3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively.

The large gain in utilities in December was reflected in both its components and again can, in large part, be traced to unusually severe weather conditions.

SHIPS AND MEN OF THE RCN

The Royal Canadian Navy's 46 warships range from an aircraft carrier through helicopter-destroyers, destroyer escorts, ocean escorts, a submarine and supporting ships. One or two Royal Navy submarines are generally in service with the Atlantic Command under the operational control of the RCN. Four small ships are on loan to other government departments.

There are more than 100 auxiliaries, from research vessels down to small passenger ferries.

The 20,000-ton aircraft carrier "Bonaventure" leads the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) team. She has an angled deck, mirror landing aid and steam catapult, and carries twin-engine CS2F-2 "Tracker" anti-submarine planes and CHSS-2 "Sea King" all-weather ASW helicopters.

ESCORT STRENGTH

There are 23 helicopter-destroyers and destroyer escorts in the fleet, 20 of them built in the past ten years. Two had a hangar and flight deck included in their initial construction to accommodate the heavy "Sea King" helicopter, and this year the sixth of the seven original destroyer escorts of the "St. Laurent" class will have been similarly converted. All the helicopter-destroyers have Canadian variable-depth sonar.

The first of three conventional submarines of the "Oberon" class will be commissioned at the naval dockyard at Chatham, England, in the autumn; these will be followed by the other two in 1967 and 1968.

The RCN has two first-line air squadrons, one armed with "Trackers", the other with "Sea Kings". Four other squadrons are for training, evaluation and utility services. Fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft of four of the squadrons have a carrier-operating capability.

PERSONNEL

The strength of the regular Navy, as of January 1, 1965, was 20,133 officers, men, Wrens and cadets. That of the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve was 2,393 officers, men, Wrens and cadets of the University Naval Training Divisions.

Two thirds of the Navy's strength is concentrated on the east coast, and five of its six air squadrons operate from the RCN air station, HMCS "Shearwater", near Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Detachments operate from the deck of HMCS "Bonaventure".

The fleet underwent a re-organization of ships and personnel during December and January; ships are now arranged in phases of operational availability and their manning conforms to a cyclic system. As a result, at least half the fleet will always be available for operational requirements and other elements can be brought forward readily in emergencies.

MOVING AIRPORT SIDEWALKS

Montreal International Airport is to have moving sidewalks, the Department of Transport has announced. The walks, which were included in the original plans as an optional feature, to be added if and when traffic warranted, will be installed in the tunnels connecting the main terminal with the aeroquay.

The Montreal Airport installations will be equipped with all the latest safety devices recommended in the safety code of the American Standards Association. For instance, all sidewalks will have double balustrades with moving handrails similar to those on escalators. The walks will operate at a safe speed, convenient for people of all ages.