

*Supply—Trade and Commerce*

States are considerably higher. By the end of the crop year, that is July 31, I feel that all our shipping routes will have given a good account of themselves as far as the movement of grain is concerned.

I would now like to deal with the activities of the department in so far as trade promotion and related objectives are concerned. One of the major functions of the Department of Trade and Commerce is the promotion of Canadian trade on a world-wide basis. Although almost all the branches in the department share in this promotional activity, some are more directly concerned than others. The activities of the department have been covered in the annual report for the year 1957 which was tabled in the House of Commons on May 22 last. I shall not now go over the ground covered in this report, but I shall single out a few activities of the department which are of particular interest to hon. members and to the Canadian business community.

One of these activities is the work performed by our trade commissioner service. The major job of a trade commissioner is to direct trade promotion, and in this field he acts as a valuable link between Canada's exporting community and the markets in his local territory. From modest beginnings over 60 years ago the service has extended the size and scope of its operations to its present strength of 127 officers. A small number of these are stationed in Ottawa, but over 100 officers are serving in 58 posts located in 45 countries.

The trade publicity branch was set up to perform a wide range of promotional activities. Chief among these are the publication of the periodicals *Foreign Trade* and *Commerce Exterieur*, the promotion of trade fairs, publicity in local and foreign media, advertising, supplying trade commissioners with literature and producing a multitude of general publications of a trade promotional nature.

The work of these organizations is largely made possible by the members of the commodities branch who provide a liaison with industry and the business community in Canada. This involves the collection and exchange of information about trading opportunities brought to light by the department's activities at home and abroad. As part of their trade promotion work commodity officers are called upon to visit plants, to attend meetings of business associations, to prepare trade studies and market surveys, and to arrange for the display of Canadian goods abroad. Similar work is carried on by the agricultural and fisheries branch in its field of operation.

Another developing activity in trade promotion is through trade fairs or exhibitions abroad. Participation in foreign trade fairs is regarded by Canadian manufacturers, as well as by this department, as one of the more effective and inexpensive ways of advertising Canada and Canadian products abroad. Trade fairs play a significant role in our export trade promotion activities. They enable us to exhibit Canadian goods in the very markets we want to reach, directly before interested buyers and traders who have assembled purposely to view, compare and consider offerings in their particular merchandise fields. In many markets, particularly in western Europe, trade fairs are an accepted part of international business activity, and accordingly we are virtually compelled to take cognizance of their significance.

Through trade fairs we can accomplish initial promotion of Canadian goods not sold in a particular market heretofore, or we can strengthen the market coverage of lines already introduced. We can assist the Canadian trade commissioner in his special duties. Both the department and Canadian firms participating acquire further knowledge about export prospects and market requirements, including what foreign competitors are doing; and where the public is admitted to the fair we perform an effective information job for Canada under advantageous conditions.

For many Canadian firms our trade fair program bridges the gap between no participation by that firm at all, and the time when the firm will be able to exhibit by itself. There is evidence that our efforts to assist exporters in the use of the trade fair technique are bearing fruit. Certainly the majority of firms that we have introduced to this sales method are enthusiastic about its value.

Our participation in trade fairs is a growing program. Our activities definitely have the endorsement and support of Canadian exporters and those interested trade associations with whom we maintain liaison for advisory purposes. There is no doubt that Canadian industry appreciates our assistance in this method of export trade development. In 1957 a total of 255 Canadian companies participated in the 16 Canadian exhibits abroad sponsored by the Department of Trade and Commerce.

Early in 1959 we will see the culmination of work now on foot to stage a practical businessman's trade show of Canadian products in Jamaica and Trinidad, to mark the first year of the Federation of the West Indies. These particular shows may have special significance to our future operations