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March Foreign Trade: Canada's total foreign trade in March was valued at \$454,900,000, showing an increase of 6.3 per cent over the corresponding month last year, according to figures released by the Bureau of Statistics. Aggregate value for the first quarter of this year was up to \$1,330,900,000 from \$1,265,600,000 in the same period of 1948, or by five per cent.

The rise in the value of total foreign trade both for the month and quarter was due to an increase in the value of imports, domestic exports being slightly lower in both periods. In the month the value of imports rose 20 per cent and in the quarter by 13.7 per cent. Domestic exports were down five per cent in the month and two per cent in the quarter.

As a result of the rise in the value of imports and the decline in the value of domestic exports, Canada had a debit balance on her foreign trade of \$16,900,000 in March -- the first since April last year -- as compared with a favourable balance of \$33,900,000 in March, 1948. In the first quarter of this year there was a small overall debit balance of \$600,000 as compared with a favourable balance of \$95,000,000 in the same period of 1948.

The debit balance on the month's trade with the United States was \$44,900,000 as compared with \$24,200,000 in the corresponding month last year, raising the three-month total to \$132,800,000 from \$107,900,000 in the same period of 1948. The credit balance with the United Kingdom in the month was down to \$11,300,000 from \$37,700,000 in the same month last year, and in the first quarter to \$63,200,000 from \$115,000,000.

Import Trade Higher: Showing gains in total purchases from both Commonwealth and foreign countries and increases in seven of the nine main commodity classifications, Canada's imports for consumption during March advanced in value to \$235,900,000 as compared with \$197,100,000 in March last year, bringing the cumulative value for the first quarter of the year to \$665,700,000 as against \$585,300,000 in 1948.

Imports from Commonwealth countries in the month totalled \$43,900,000 compared with \$32,500,000 a year ago, and in the three months rose to \$115,300,000 as against \$92,600,000. Total from foreign countries rose to \$192,000,000 in the month from \$164,500,000 in 1948, and in the quarter to \$550,400,000 from \$492,700,000.

Purchases from the United Kingdom during March continued the upward trend of the two previous months this year, being valued at \$28,343,000 as against \$22,918,000 in February and \$21,601,000 in March last year. Total imports for the first quarter of the year were up to \$76,666,000 compared with \$61,062,000 a year ago.

Imports from the United States in March rose in value to \$168,952,000 compared with \$138,299,000 a year earlier, making the cumulative total for the first quarter \$482,570,000 as against \$425,122,000 last year.

New Dwelling Units: The number of dwelling units completed in Canada in the first three months of 1949 is estimated at 17,800, up 6,300 or 54 per cent over the same period of 1948. The increase is attributed to the unusually higher carryover at the beginning of 1949. In spite of the greatly increased completions, the amount of work in progress remains high, according to the monthly report by the Bureau of Statistics.

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