

MANPOWER SITUATION: Since the beginning of March, the number of workers seeking jobs through National Employment Service offices has declined, and the decline will be further accentuated in the next few weeks as the construction and agricultural industries become seasonally active, it was pointed out by Honourable Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour, in issuing the current manpower summary.

The resumption of normal production schedules by Ontario industries after the shut-downs in the previous month because of the gas and power shortages, was the greatest contributory factor to the decline in unplaced applicants since February. Unplaced applicants increased slightly in both the Quebec and Maritime regions with the gradual cessation of logging operations. In both the Prairie and Pacific regions, applicants remained at relatively the same levels as in the previous month.

There were 199,000 unplaced applicants registered with the National Employment Service at March 18, 1948. At February 12, unplaced applicants were 198,000. They reached a peak of 201,000 at February 26. Male applicants numbered 3,000 more at March 18 than one month previously; on the other hand, female applicants showed a 2,000 decrease.

Unfilled vacancies increased to 34,000 at March 18, from 33,000 at February 12. These were for male workers and were concentrated mostly in the manufacturing industry. There were 18,000 unfilled vacancies for men and 16,000 for women at March 18.

ICAO AGENDA: The Agenda for the Second Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization has been transmitted to ICAO's 46 member nations and to the 22 non-member states and 15 international organizations which have also been invited to attend, it was announced in Montreal. The meeting will open June 1 at the United Nations buildings in Geneva, and will last approximately three weeks.

The work of the Assembly will be assigned to four commissions: administrative, technical, economic and legal. Among the items to be considered by these commissions are the 1948-49 budget and its apportionment among contracting states, the Organization's relations with the United Nations and other international bodies, International Standards and Recommended Practices, undue economic burdens on international air transport, the statistical program of the Organization, an international agency for the operation of communication facilities and ground aids, and a draft convention on the international recognition of rights in aircraft. A report on the special conference held in Geneva last November to draft an agreement for the Multilateral Exchange of Commercial Air Rights will be reviewed by the Economic Commission.

\$423,978,000 SALES: Sales totalling \$4,082,900 during February have brought the grand total of receipts by War Assets Corporation from the disposal of war surplus to \$423,978,000, according to a statement issued by the Corporation.

Aggregate of sales to February 29, 1948, by principal commodities was, in round numbers, as follows:

Ships and components.....	\$115,752,000
Automotive vehicles and equipment	67,497,000
Machinery and production equipment.....	59,673,000
Lands and Buildings.....	49,075,000
Clothing and Textiles.....	35,067,000
Electrical equipment.....	16,161,000
Metals.....	15,051,000
Aircraft and Components.....	12,008,000
Scrap.....	10,264,000
Chemicals.....	8,499,000
Office Furniture and Equipment...	5,087,000
Other miscellaneous materials....	31,844,000

ECONOMIC TREND: Wholesale prices moved downward during February for the first time in more than a year, states the Canadian Statistical Review, new monthly publication of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, in its review of economic conditions in February. A further decline in government bond prices, a new international wheat agreement, and a slight decline in industrial activity partly as a result of power shortages were other highlights of the month.

The sharp break in United States commodity prices during early February was checked after a fall of about 10 per cent. A small but uncertain recovery followed until a further drop in early March brought prices of 28 commodities to the lowest point in seven months. The February decline was reflected to a small extent in Canadian markets and the index of industrial materials fell slightly more than two points in the four-week period ending February 27. In the same period the index for Canadian farm product prices fell from 133.9 to 132.3.

A further decline in the prices of Canadian Government bonds brought the yield on the longest dated issues to slightly less than three per cent per annum, the rate of interest at which Canadian Government bonds were issued during the war years. These declines followed a similar drop in government bond prices in the United States and the United Kingdom during the latter part of 1947.

Though shortages of electric power and natural gas in some areas placed a small check on the rate of industrial activity during the past two months, industrial production has continued high. The index for January was 176, only a little below the last quarter of 1947. Automobile production, affected by the shortage of gas, was down about 16 per cent from December. Steel output, on the other hand, was slightly higher and production for the month was at about 87 per cent of reported

capacity. Freight carloadings declined more than seasonally during February but recovered sharply during the last week of the month. Part of this recovery resulted from the settlement of the coal strike in Alberta and British Columbia.

"MAGNIFICENT'S" AIR FIGHTERS: Specifications of the aircraft to be flown by Canada's topflight naval pilots aboard the new carrier H.M.C.S. "Magnificent" reveal that they rank among the fastest propeller-driven planes in the world. The new single-seater Sea Fury fighters are capable of a top speed of 460 miles an hour at 16,000 feet and have a cruising range of approximately 1800 - 2000 miles, while the two seater Firefly IV fighter reconnaissance plane approaches 400 miles an hour.

Pilots and observers of the 19th Carrier Air Group have been undergoing intensive training at Eglinton, in Northern Ireland since last summer, and will transfer to "Magnificent" in time for her working up exercises. "Magnificent" will move to Canadian waters in the early summer. Commanded by Lieutenant Commander H. J. Hunter, R.C.N., of Como, P.Q., the 19th Carrier Air Group is made up of two squadrons: No. 803, flying the Sea Fury fighters, and No. 825, the Firefly IV fighter-reconnaissance aircraft. The first mentioned squadron is commanded by Lieutenant Commander H. J. Bird, R.C.N. of Kingston, Ont., and No. 825 by Lieutenant Commander R. E. Bartlett, R.C.N. of Qu'Appelle, Sask.

The Sea Fury, a Hawker aircraft, has an initial rate of climb over 5,000 feet a minute, its Bristol Centaurus XVIII engine being capable of taking it to a height of over 40,000 feet. Its best cruising speed is 300 miles an hour at 20,000 feet, and with the attachment of auxiliary tanks it can achieve a range of 2,080 miles. When the plane is stowed in the hangars, its 41 foot wing-span can be reduced to 18 feet when its wings are folded.

The Firefly IV, a new edition of the Firefly I that 825 Squadron formerly flew from H.M.C.S. "Warrior", has a top speed of 386 miles an hour at 14,750 feet. Its rate of climb is 3,000 feet a minute and it is powered by a Griffon 74 Rolls-Royce engine. This Fairey-built aircraft has a range of just over 1,300 miles using drop tanks and although it has a 41 foot span with its wings spread, can reduce it to a handy 16 feet when the time comes to stow it in the hangar.

NEW NATIONAL PARK: Hon. James A. MacKinnon, Acting Minister of Mines and Resources, has announced that an Order-in-Council had been passed proclaiming an area of 79.5 square miles in Albert County, New Brunswick, as a national park and subject to the National Parks Act and regulations thereunder. The

passing of the Order in Council constitutes formal acceptance of the offer of the Government of New Brunswick to convey this area to the Dominion for national parks purposes. The new park area is situated between the Goose and Upper Salmon (Alma) Rivers and extends northward from the Bay of Fundy for a distance of nine miles, and is of outstanding interest from a scenic and recreational standpoint.

HUNDREDS OF TONS OF GREASE: When the United States handed over its war surplus materials in Canada to the Canadian Government, included was a considerable quantity of motor vehicle supplies for use along the Alaska Highway, including hundreds of tons of grease and thousands of gallons of lubricating oils.

One lot of these lubricants, totalling over 200 tons of grease and more than 156,000 gallons of oil, ranging in viscosity from 10 to 140, has been assembled at White Horse, Yukon, and is now being put on the market by the Calgary Branch of War Assets Corporation, it was announced by War Assets Corporation.

Solids include chassis and gear lubricants and graphite, while liquid stocks are made up of lubricating and kerosene oil and hydraulic fluid. Also in the group are over 7,000 steel drums of 45 and 53 U.S. gallon capacity.

LIVING COSTS AT PEAK: The Dominion Bureau of Statistics cost-of-living index, on the base 1935-39=100, reached an all-time high point on March 1, standing at 150.8 as compared with 150.1 on February 2. Although this placed the index slightly above the July, 1920 peak of 150.6, the increase during February was the smallest recorded in seven months. The increase in this series since March last year amounted to 21.9 points. From August 1939 to March 1 this year, the increase in the Dominion cost-of-living index was 49.6 per cent.

The rise between February and March this year was contributed entirely by the non-food sections of the index. The food group actually declined fractionally from 186.1 to 185.9 as price decreases for eggs and citrus fruits outweighed increases for vegetables; changes in other food sub-groups were mixed and comparatively small.

The sharpest rise came in clothing which advanced from 165.1 to 169.9. Home furnishings and services moved up from 159.9 to 161.2, and fuel and light from 120.1 to 121.0. The rent index remained at 119.9, and the miscellaneous items series at 122.8.

WHOLESALE PRICES: The weekly indexes of industrial material prices, on the base 1926=100, averaged slightly lower in March. Declines in gum rosin, hides and raw wool proved of more importance than increases in oats, steers, hogs, raw cotton, raw rubber and zinc