

Seismic operations have increased considerably over last year and should be reflected in an increased drilling programme next year. It is expected that \$2 million will be spent on seismic exploration, with an additional \$1 million being spent on goods and services related to these operations. The private contractors responsible for this phase of exploration have approximately 10 crews active this winter.

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ENGINEERING MISSION

Mr. George Hees, Minister of Trade and Commerce, has announced that a Canadian trade mission of construction engineers will visit Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Trinidad and Jamaica in order to familiarize themselves with opportunities for construction in the countries concerned. They will meet government officials, architects and consulting engineers, contractors and bankers, and also persons who may be interested in acting as their representatives. Thus they will be afforded an opportunity of providing information on the ability of Canadian firms to undertake a wide variety of tasks. Climatic and other conditions present Canadian contractors with so many different problems that they are able to apply this experience in other lands.

A PREVIOUS MISSION

Mr. Hees said that the decision to organize such a mission was due, in large measure, to the success achieved by the mission of Canadian consulting engineers that visited South America last September. So much interest was aroused in government and professional circles, and the Canadians were so warmly welcomed, that it was felt an allied group of engineers should visit other countries in Latin America.

Eight firms, including one from Calgary and one from Vancouver, will be represented on the mission, members of which will assemble in Mexico City on February 19. The tour will end in Kingston, Jamaica, on March 14. The group will be accompanied by Mr. David N. Mott, of the Engineering and Equipment Division, Department of Trade and Commerce, who will act as secretary.

JOINT CONTRACTS PROPOSED

The Canadian engineers are aware that experienced contractors operate in each of the countries they will visit. They aim to determine the possibility of entering into agreements with locally-established firms with a view to undertaking contracts on a joint basis. Engineers in various countries develop special skills and techniques, which may be "exported" and utilized in other lands with particular problems.

Much interest has been shown by Canadian engineers in foreign projects. They have undertaken major assignments, under provisions

of the Colombo Plan for the Economic Development of South and Southeast Asia, in India, Pakistan and Ceylon. Many contracts have been secured in The West Indies, while work has been performed in Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. The projects executed abroad include an atomic reactor in India, a newsprint mill, cement plant and the Warsak Dam, in Pakistan, together with the construction of radio stations and the erection of hotels.

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TRUEMAN AT TAGORE CENTENARY

Dr. A.W. Trueman, Director of the Canada Council, recently travelled to Bombay to take part in the centenary celebrations in honour of the Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. The celebrations were held from January 1 to 7 as the thirty-sixth session of the All-Indian Bengali Literary Conference and were inaugurated by Prime Minister Nehru. The conference, attended by representatives of some 23 countries, dealt with various aspects of Tagore's work. Dr. Trueman opened the January 2 meeting with an address entitled "Tagore as a World Figure".

While he was in the East, Mr. Trueman visited several other countries and discussed with officials in India, Pakistan, Malaya and Australia problems of the encouragement and support of the arts and letters.

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REVISED PRICE INDEX

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics announces that a revision of the Consumer Price Index is now nearing completion. The primary purpose of the revision is to bring the items included in the index and their relative importance in line with more current family purchases as reported in a family expenditure survey of 1957. The time-base will not be changed and the revised index will continue on the base 1949=100. Thus, month-to-month movements will reflect 1957 rather than 1948 family-buying habits, but the index will continue to measure percentage change in prices from 1949. In view of the fact that the 1949 base is being retained, the revision will not affect wage contracts in which escalation is based on the index.

It is expected that the revised Consumer Price Index will be introduced early in April with publication of the March index. With the appearance of the revised index the old series will be discontinued, but the new index will be published for the 4-year period 1957-60 so that the two series can be compared. A detailed description of the revised index will be published during the latter part of March.

The weights in the revised series will reflect changes in purchases of Canadian families that took place between the years 1948 and 1957. The most significant change was