

AUTO PRICES DOWN AS PREDICTED

The following statement was made on October 13 by Mr. C.M. Drury, Minister of Industry:

On September 30, I stated that we should see a progressive narrowing of the differential in prices of automobiles between Canada and the United States through the implementation of the Automotive Programme. I was, therefore, most pleased to note that the prices of 1966 model cars provide not only for a substantial narrowing of the differential but for appreciable decreases from the prices of similarly equipped 1965 model cars manufactured in Canada. General Motors has now announced suggested retail price reductions averaging \$73 per car. Ford announced reductions averaging \$62 per vehicle. At the same time, Chrysler has announced price reductions ranging from \$38 to \$126 per car. The companies have also announced price reductions for imported cars.

U.S.-CANADA DIFFERENTIAL

With regard to the differential in prices between Canada and the United States, I mentioned in my statement on September 30 that the most meaningful comparison between prices is at the factory, excluding taxes and adjusted for differences in exchange. It is, of course, at this level, that the Automotive Programme influences manufacturers' costs and their resulting prices. I pointed out at that time that, on this basis, the average differential between Canadian and U.S. prices for the popular models of 1965 cars was somewhat less than \$150, or 8 per cent. The manufacturers' wholesale prices at the factory for 1966 cars show a significant narrowing of this differential, ranging from one third to one half for the three companies concerned. The remaining differential now ranges from 3.0 per cent to 5.0 per cent, compared with nearly 8 per cent for their high volume 1965 models. These figures illustrate that the benefits of the Automotive Programme in terms of relatively lower costs are being passed on to Canadian consumers. I am confident that, as the objectives of the Automotive Programme are progressively achieved, this remaining differential of 3 to 5 per cent will be eliminated.

BIG ROAD PLAN FOR NORTH

Mr. Arthur Laing, the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, has announced a ten-year road-building programme in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The new programme, which has been under study for the past 18 months, calls for an average expenditure of \$10 million a year, double the annual investment for roads in the previous ten years. This is the first phase of a long-range, 20-year northern roads network programme that is to be undertaken by the Department of Northern Affairs.

In areas covered by the 20-year plan, the road network should bring every area possessing exploitable resources within 200 miles of a permanent road. Noting that Canada's North was moving into a new era of search and exploration, Mr. Laing said

"adequate roads will provide the support needed to develop the resources of both the Yukon and the Northwest Territories". "The programme is of first importance for the Territories and for Canada as a whole," he added.

The roads to be built under the ten-year programme, including roads into the rich resource areas of the territories and highways providing communication between existing communities, will gradually reduce the dependence of the North on seasonal transportation for bulk shipments, lower the cost of holding large inventories, and bring the cost of living more in line with that of other parts of Canada. Another important benefit will be the greater accessibility of the North to tourists.

DATA PROCESSING STUDIED

Senior civil servants from 15 countries recently spent 10 days in Ottawa studying mechanized data-processing in a course specially prepared for them by the Civil Service Commission of Canada. The Management Analysis Division of the Commission designed the course at the request of the United Nations. The officials will evaluate the material and recommend its use by the UN. Among the countries represented were Argentina, Mexico, Kenya, Iran and Greece.

The course consisted of 21 lectures by CSC staff and departmental experts, and visits to government departments.

TRAINING CONFERENCE

Mr. Allan J. MacEachen, the Minister of Labour, announced recently that a federal-provincial conference of ministers of labour and ministers of education was being planned for later in the year to discuss training programmes in designated areas and in industry generally. This conference, which was endorsed at the federal-provincial meeting last July, will consider the problem of training in industry in the light of broader developments in the fields of manpower and automation. The Minister said that training in industry was a matter of the greatest concern to employers, workers and governments.

CANADA-U.S. ILO MEETING

Mr. MacEachen also announced that next year Canada would be host for the first time to an American regional conference of the International Labour Organization. This conference, which will be held in Ottawa in September 1966, will be attended by about 200 delegates, representing employers, workers and governments, from north, south and central America and the Caribbean. The Minister of Labour said that it would be the first full-scale ILO meeting held in Canada since the period during World War II and the early post-war years when the ILO made its temporary home in Canada.

Mr. MacEachen said he expected that this conference would advance the development of manpower and social policy in all parts of the Americas.