

RCAF EQUIPMENT FOR NATO: Offers of more than 10 million dollars worth of RCAF equipment has been accepted by five NATO nations under Canada's mutual aid programme for the 1953-54 period, Air Force headquarters announced on February 15.

Official acceptance has been received from France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom of \$10,265,000 worth of aircraft radio compasses, fragmentation bombs, and spares for F-86 Sabres. Included are 1,000 radio compasses at an estimated cost of \$4,471,000 and 3,000 fragmentation bombs costing approximately \$394,000. The entire shipment of bombs will go to France.

The United Kingdom will receive a \$5.4 million contribution of spares for the 370 F-86 Sabres allotted to them under the 1952-53 mutual aid programme. Of this amount \$740,000 will be shipped during the present fiscal year leaving \$4,660,000 to be manufactured and delivered during the 1954-55 financial year.

Shipments of Canadian military equipment to NATO countries started in 1950 under a plan whereby Canada offered to donate equipment to assist Atlantic treaty powers in their defence organizations.

* * * *

CANADA-AUSTRALIA TALKS: The Department of External Affairs announced on February 18 that during the last few weeks discussions have been held in Melbourne between representatives of the Canadian and Australian Governments for the purpose of considering amendments to the Canada-Australia Air Transport Agreement of 1946. Under that Agreement air services were established between Canada and Australia on behalf of the two countries by Canadian Pacific Airlines and by British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines respectively.

* * * *

TOUR OF ATTACHES: More than a score of foreign naval, military and air attachés and service advisers to Commonwealth High Commissioners appointed to Canada are visiting defence and industrial establishments in Northern and Western Canada from February 15 to 27, it was announced by National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.

Members of the party left by plane on February 15 for Fort Churchill, Manitoba.

* * * *

TRIBUTES TO AGNES MACPHAIL: All parties in the House of Commons paid tribute at the opening of the sitting on February 15 to the late Agnes Macphail, first woman to be elected a member of the Canadian House of Commons, who died in Toronto on February 13. Miss Macphail was first elected in 1921 and spent 19 years in the House of Commons. Subsequently she served in the Legislature of the Province of Ontario.

HALF BILLION STEEL WORK: Value of work done by Canada's bridge building and structural steel industry rose to a new peak for the fourth straight year in 1952, the \$139,716,836 total topping the \$109,650,351 high of 1951 by more than 27%, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics reports in its annual review of the industry's operations. This was close to three and a half times the 1946 value of \$40,122,695, nearly double the 1943 wartime peak of \$72,515,834 and almost nine and a half times the 1938 value of \$14,817,901.

The latest figure brought the total value of work done by the industry in the seven postwar years 1946-52 to \$565,974,274, over 63% more than the \$346,170,587 total of the seven war years 1939-45 and nearly eight times the \$71,881,328 total of the seven prewar years 1932-38.

* * * *

THEATRES FOR TROOPS: With all the colour of a Hollywood premiere, four modern theatres will be officially opened later this month at Canadian Army camps in West Germany.

The new theatres, managed and staffed by the British Army Kinema Corporation, are equipped with the most modern equipment available and are easily adaptable to three-dimensional films. Small but modern, the theatres have a combined seating capacity of 1,200.

* * * *

SECURITY PRICES FIRMER: Common stocks presented a progressively firmer price tone through January as the composite index for 101 representative issues moved up from 152.4 for the week of December 31 to 160.4 for the week of January 28. All three major groups were higher with the index for 80 industrials changing from 151.6 to 159.4, while that for 13 utilities advanced from 144.0 to 152.2, and eight banks from 180.4 to 189.1.

* * * *

Unemployment insurance benefit payments increased in December to \$16,882,107 from November's \$10,172,035 and 1952's December total of \$10,926,557. At the same time the number of days for which compensation was paid rose to 5,413,801 from 3,337,519 the month before and 3,586,600 a year earlier.

* * * *

Farm cash income from the sale of farm products and from grain adjustment payments on earlier crops totalled an estimated \$2,674,679,000 in 1953, about 4% less than in 1952 and 5% under the 1951 record of \$2,811,949,000.

* * * *

Average purchase price of new cars was \$2,505 last year, \$22 more than in 1952, \$957 more than in 1946, \$1,426 more than in 1939.