

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR, 1950

(C.W.B. December 30, 1949)

MORE OVERSEAS EXHIBITORS: It is just a year and a half since the first Canadian International Trade Fair introduced a new instrument of trade promotion to North America, and only six months until it opens its doors for the third time in Toronto, from May 29 to June 9, 1950. The change and progress in that short time has been considerable.

Evidence of its increasing stature is not hard to find. Commonwealth and foreign governments are showing concrete recognition of the experimental successes in 1948 and 1949 by the encouragement and special facilities they are giving their producers to exhibit in 1950. These range from relaxation of currency regulations in order to make the necessary dollar funds available to bona fide exhibitors, to actual cash subsidies which make their representation at the C.I.T.F. a matter of national policy.

The progressive results are shown in the figures of increasing international participation which reveal that, roughly 40% of exhibitors came from abroad in 1948, and 60% in 1949. Preliminary allocations of space for 1950 are running roughly 80% to overseas exhibitors, although this proportion is expected to decrease slightly as later applications from Canadian producers are completed. These figures are all the more significant when it is realized that 40% more space has been made available for 1950 than was used in 1949.

At the 1948 Trade Fair products were displayed from 28 countries, increasing to 35

countries in 1949. It is expected that still more will be represented in 1950, with substantial exhibits in a variety of classifications for the first time from France, Spain, Australia and Germany, to name just a few. British exhibits will be so numerous that it appears likely they will exceed the Canadian in the amount of space used. Italian firms are expected to make a strong bid for dollar markets in 1950, and there are indications of increased interest from Belgium and Denmark, among many others. Czechoslovakian and Yugoslavian products will again be displayed in greater quantity and variety, but on the other side of the ledger is the doubt concerning Chinese participation resulting from the political confusion in that country.

Greatest development in the Canadian picture is the organization of a nation-wide network of Trade Fair Committees, organized in December in each of the ten provinces, on a regional basis. Private business interests and local organizations are strongly represented, together with the trade development departments of the various provincial governments, to insure that every part of Canada shares to the fullest possible extent in the trade promotion possibilities presented at the Trade Fair. One effect is expected to be reflected in very much greater attendance of business visitors from all over Canada. Special trains to the Trade Fair from the Maritimes and the western provinces have already been projected.

CANADIAN ARMY, 1949: The Canadian Army hit its peacetime stride during 1949.

In a year's end roundup of Army progress and activity released on December 28, the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, cited as "outstanding" the Army's stepped-up program of airborne and winter training for all ranks; the introduction of newer clothing and more modern equipment, and the great strides made towards completion of an unprecedented construction program embracing armouries, barracks and married quarters for the troops.

But the most encouraging sign of all that the Army has settled into its peacetime role, and has become a vital factor in the life of young Canadians, was the fact that of the thousands of soldiers who completed their term of engagement in the past twelve months, 97 percent re-engaged to make a career of service life. Included in the three percent that failed to sign on for a second "hitch" -- this time for five instead of three years -- was a small number of men released as unsuitable.

The year opened with an obvious increase in interest in the army and January gave the service its biggest and best recruiting month

since May 1947. During that month no fewer than 513 applicants were accepted for enlistment, jumping the strength of the Active Force as at January 31, to 17,976 all ranks. Strength of the army as at December 3 was 20,244 -- an increase of more than 2,200 officers and men in less than 12 months.

ARMY WINTER TRAINING: With one course already underway at Prairie Command and others slated to begin in each of the four Commands early in the New Year, the Canadian Army's winter training programme is now proceeding on a greatly expanding scale.

In announcing formation of these Command Winter Training Schools, the Minister of National Defence, Mr. Claxton, said they are designed to provide troops with outdoor activities in winter time by applying normal tactical principles to cold-weather work.

Each course is of three weeks duration, and several will be run during the winter at each of the following centres: Eastern Command, Tracadie, N.S.; Quebec Command, Valcartier; Central Command, Petawawa; Prairie Command, Shilo; Western Command, Wainwright, Alta.

NOVEMBER EXPORTS TO U.S. REACH RECORD:

Canadian commodity exports to the United States during November reached the highest figure for any one month in the whole history of Canadian-United States trade. According to figures released by the Bureau of Statistics, Canada exported goods worth over \$173,000,000 to the United States in the month, an increase of more than \$8,000,000 over the previous peak in November last year. Last month's total included \$171,300,000 in domestic exports and \$2,300,000 in re-exports.

Total exports to all countries last month were valued at \$296,000,000, just fractionally under the extraordinarily high total value for November, 1948. For the 11 months the total stood at \$2,734,000,000 compared with \$2,791,000,000 for the corresponding period of 1948. This means that for the second peacetime year in succession Canadian exports may exceed \$3,000,000,000.

Import figures for November are not yet complete. But if commodity purchases from the United States were close to the average of preceding months this year, as a result of the high export value Canada will have a small credit balance with the United States for November.

To the end of November, the level of Canadian exports to the United States this year stood at \$1,362,000,000, only \$10,000,000 below the aggregate at November 30, 1948, despite the fact that exports to the United States in September this year were \$50,000,000 below the level of the same month in 1948. Exports to the United States increased from \$115,000,000 in September, when the Canadian dollar was devalued, to \$150,000,000 in October and to \$173,000,000 in November. While these three months are normally good months for our exports, there was a marked improvement of trend in comparison with last year. Due to the closing of navigation and the Christmas holidays, exports to the United States in December however, are often below November.

Domestic and foreign exports to the United Kingdom in November totalled \$57,200,000, about \$15,000,000 below the unusually high

value of \$72,300,000 reached in the previous month, but slightly above the value of \$56,900,000 for November, 1948. For the year to November 30, the aggregate value was \$659,000,000, up \$19,000,000 from the same time in 1948.

Domestic commodity exports to other Commonwealth countries were lower in overall value, declining in November to \$20,500,000 as compared with \$34,300,000 a year earlier, and for the 11 months totalling \$271,000,000 as against nearly \$288,000,000 last year. Sales to the British West Indies dropped to \$2,917,000 in the month from \$4,564,000 last year due chiefly to a sharp decline in shipments to Trinidad and Tobago, and for the 11 months totalled \$39,900,000 compared with \$54,300,000. To Commonwealth countries in Africa exports also dropped off to \$4,176,000 in November from \$11,000,000, and for the 11 months stood at \$78,900,000 compared with \$86,600,000. Accounting for most of this decrease, shipments to the Union of South Africa in the month declined to \$3,670,000 from \$10,220,000, bringing the cumulative total below last year at \$71,400,000 as against \$77,200,000.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS REVIEW:

It is estimated that the gross revenues of the Canadian National Railways for the past twelve months will establish a record high total of \$499 millions, an increase of \$8 millions over 1948. However, the shrinking margin between revenues and expenses continues to cause considerable anxiety. Operating expenses, with higher labour costs and an increased general price index for materials and supplies, climbed to \$480 millions by the close of the year, an increase of \$15 millions over 1948.

The operating surplus of approximately \$19 millions will be the lowest since 1938, and after provision for interest due on securities held by the public and owing to the Government, payment of taxes, equipment rents and similar charges, the year will end with an income deficit estimated at \$45 millions.