

period on the eve of the Korean War. About that time it has been said that certain powers were 'tempted' to commit aggression by the prospect of an easy conquest of a nearly defenceless area. Since that time the free world has built up its armed forces and has made clear its determination not to tolerate wanton aggression. The apparent improvement in the present international situation is directly related to the growing ability of the free nations to speak from a position of strength. It is essential if we are to maintain and improve the prospects for peace that the NATO countries must continue, perhaps for a lengthy period, to devote a substantial part of their resources to the common defence effort."

Cash disbursements during the three-year programme, the Paper reports, have been \$5,005,479,000, and total budgetary expenditures for the period are likely to amount to \$5,137,565,000.

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**EMPLOYMENT RISING:** The spring pick-up in employment accelerated during April but at a somewhat slower pace than is usual for the month the Department of Labour reported on May 19. The total number of persons working during the month ending April 17 rose moderately. Unemployment fell slightly less than a year ago; the usual seasonal increase in the labour force was also considerably less because of the lower labour requirements this spring.

Cold weather, which retarded expansion of outdoor activities, particularly in agriculture and construction, combined with reduced hirings in a number of manufacturing industries, contributed to the slower-than-usual rise in employment. Outdoor activities increased in all regions during the month but on a smaller scale than usual and labour surpluses remained well above those of last year in most labour market areas.

Although total manufacturing employment changed very little during the month, it fell further below last year's rising levels. Employment continued well above year-earlier levels in the paper products, motor vehicles, tobacco products, electrical apparatus and chemicals industries and well below in the textile, clothing, primary iron and steel, leather products, railway rolling stock, aircraft and farm implement industries.

Employment in the trade and service industries showed little change from the previous month and continued above the levels of the previous year.

The civilian labour force at 5,257,000 in the week ended April 17, 1954, showed small increases from 5,236,000 in the week ended March 20, 1954, and from 5,241,000 in the week ended April 18, 1953. These estimates are obtained from the monthly labour force survey conducted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

**WORLD WHEAT:** Supplies of wheat remaining on or about April 1 this year in the four major exporting countries for export and carry-over at the end of their respective crop years amounted to 1,844,600,000 bushels, some 31% greater than the 1,406,000,000 bushels available a year ago. Totals follow by countries with last year's stocks in brackets: United States, 923,100,000 bushels (620,100,000); Canada, 652,300,000 (530,000,000); Argentina, 129,900,000 (148,800,000); and Australia, 139,300,000 (107,100,000).

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**RETAIL SALES OFF:** Canada's retailers totalled \$2,543,473,000 in sales in the first three months of this year, but this was 1.2% less than last year's first-quarter value of \$2,574,482,000. The sales decline was common to all but two provinces and six trades. Retail sales picked up a slight 0.4% in March to \$934,792,000 from \$931,476,000 a year earlier, but this was not enough to counteract the sales drops of 4% in January and 0.1% in February.

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**LIAISON TOUR:** The Canadian Ambassador to Japan, Mr. R.W. Mayhew, has completed a liaison tour of Canadian units and installations in the Far East which carried him more than 1,500 miles. In a gruelling, day-long schedule, the Ambassador spent May 12 visiting elements of the 25th Canadian Infantry Brigade on the demarcation line in Korea.

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**FEWER AUTOS SOLD:** Canadians bought 98,044 new motor vehicles for \$252,661,000 in the first three months of this year, a drop of 20,686, or 17% in number and \$43,700,000 or 15% in value from the first quarter last year. Sales were lower in each of the three months, but the March drop was considerably less than in January and February.

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**WELCOMING QUEEN:** Twenty-four R.C.A.F. jet pilots helped welcome the Queen back to Britain on May 15. The pilots, flying sabre jet fighters from the R.C.A.F. base at North Luffenham, England, formed part of a formation of 180 jet fighters and bombers which escorted the Royal Yacht Britannia up the Thames.

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**STORE SALES UP:** Canada's department stores increased their sales slightly in the first quarter this year to \$209,170,000 from \$207,531,000 in the first three months last year, a gain of 0.8%. Increased trade in three regions outweighed declines elsewhere. Higher sales in 10 departments more than offset decreases in 19.