

DRAFT AIR LAW CHANGES

ICAO CONVENTION: International airline operators may soon find it simpler to finance the purchase of new aircraft as the result of a draft convention on air law drawn up by the International Civil Aviation Organization's Legal Committee at a meeting in Brussels. The meeting, which was attended by some 60 delegates and observers representing 29 nations and international organizations, prepared the final draft of a Convention on International Recognition of Rights in Aircraft, and also formulated the Legal Committee's work programme for the coming year.

The draft Convention will be presented to the ICAO Assembly next spring. Should it be adopted, it will settle certain contentious aspects of aircraft financing which have concerned legal experts for two decades. By international agreement, every signatory state will recognize rights of ownership, of mortgage, of hire-purchase and of conditional sale, and of lease for all foreign aircraft which fly into its territories.

The Convention when signed and ratified will fulfil the following objectives:

1. "It affords international air operators the largest possible measure of assistance, in order to enable them to arrange finance for purchase of aircraft.
2. "It provides for those financing the purchase of aircraft and spare parts, and others having rights therein, the best security which can be achieved whether the assets concerned are inside or outside the state or registry of the aircraft.
3. "It secures the rights of third parties in all states concerned.
4. "It involves a minimum of interference with national law and a minimum of trouble and expense for contracting states."

LOSS OF S.S. "NOVADOC"

INQUIRY COMMISSION'S REPORT: Loss of the Canadian merchant vessel s.s. "Novadoc" with all 24 hands off the coast of Maine last March "must be considered due to an Act of God" according to the findings of the Formal Investigation undertaken by Mr. Justice W.F. Carroll of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia and Judge in Admiralty for Nova Scotia. The report of the Court as released by C.P. Edwards, Deputy Minister of Transport, was signed by Mr. Justice Carroll as Commissioner and concurred in by the three assessors: Captain Rowland Forbes of Barrington, N.S.; Captain Robert A. Goudey of Yarmouth, N.S.; and Mr. A.S.J. Hall of Toronto, Ont.

The Formal Investigation carried out under the provisions of the Canada Shipping Act of 1934 reported that the hull and machinery of the s.s. "Novadoc" were in seaworthy condition, that the vessel was equipped with all necessary

fittings to ensure safety, and that the vessel was properly manned.

According to the report of the Formal Investigation, the ship was lost "during a very heavy gale of hurricane force with heavy seas running, and whether she sank or ran on a shoal, there was no control the Master could exercise and the loss must be considered due to an Act of God". The report further states that "the loss of the s.s. "Novadoc" was not caused or contributed by the wrongful act or default or negligence of her owners, charterers or any other persons".

When the s.s. "Novadoc" sailed from Deep Brook, N.S., on March 1 bound for New York with a cargo of 360 tons of crude gypsum, the winds were light and the weather fine according to the findings of the court. At 11.18 a.m. on March 2 storm warnings were broadcast by radio to all shipping. At 2:17 a.m. on March 3 when off the Coast of Maine the vessel sent out a message to the effect that one of the hatches had been stove in and that the vessel had shipped quite a bit of water and was running before the wind to keep it down. U.S. Coastguard vessels went to the rescue followed by diligent air and surface operations but no trace of the vessel or her crew was ever found.

FARM PRICES INDEX: Prices received by Canadian farmers for agricultural products at August 15 averaged higher than at the corresponding date in 1946, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The index number of prices received for all products, on the base 1935-1939=100, at 196.7, was nine points above the index number of 187.7 a year ago.

By provinces, considerable variation exists in comparison with August last year. The index numbers for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are lower than a year ago, due principally to marked declines in prices received for potatoes, poultry and eggs and fruits. The index numbers for all other provinces have registered increases from August last year. Higher prices for live stock and dairy products are chiefly responsible for the increases in the index for each of these provinces.

ARMY FINGERPRINTS: A statement has recently appeared in the Press to the effect that the Department of National Defence "Will Turn Over Fingerprints of War Veterans Suspected of Crime". The article further goes on to say that "Fingerprints of war veterans suspected of crime are being made available to the R.C.M.P. on request, National Defence Headquarters said today".

These statements are not factually correct and have arisen owing to a misunderstanding as to the true nature of the situation, a spokesman for the Department of National Defence said today.

In the past, requests from the Royal Canad-

ian Mounted Police for fingerprint records necessary to trace wanted personnel have occasionally been referred to the Canadian Armed Forces Identification Bureau, but not always have they been complied with. Nor has the future policy in this respect been definitely decided, although it is at present under discussion.

It is likely that the use of these files will be restricted to assistance in the following fields: amnesia victims, cases of mental derangement, unknown deceased, and proof of service cases. There is no intention on the part of the Department of National Defence to make these secret and confidential records generally available. These fingerprints were made to serve primarily to identify those killed in action. It is not considered that they should be made available as a means of identification for reasons other than those mentioned above.

FARM INVESTMENT TOTALS BILLIONS: Capital investment in Canadian farms in 1946 amounted to \$5,922,347,000, more than 38 per cent above the figure recorded by the 1941 census, according to the Quarterly Bulletin of Agricultural Statistics for April-June 1947. The investment includes land and buildings, implements and machinery--including motor trucks and automobiles--and livestock, including poultry and animals on fur farms.

The estimated value of farm capital in 1946 was almost seven per cent higher than the value for 1945, but nearly 78 per cent of it can be attributed to the enhanced value of land and buildings. Higher prices for livestock, which more than offset a decrease in numbers, and substantial purchases of farm implements during 1945 increased the value of both these components of farm capital in 1946.

FINANCE DEPT. APPOINTMENTS: At a Press Conference October 10, Finance Minister Abbott announced the appointment of three deputy ministers in the department, all from within the departmental ranks.

The appointments:

Kenneth W. Taylor, economic advisor and now chairman of the Prices Board, becomes deputy minister in charge of policy.

Robert B. Bryce, director of the economic division, becomes deputy minister in charge of finance.

Dr. A.K. Eaton, director of the taxation division, becomes deputy minister in charge of taxation.

LEGION EDUCATION COURSES FOR ACTIVE ARMY: Correspondence courses in a variety of lower and upper school subjects now are being offered free of charge to members of the Canadian Army Activa Forza by the Canadian Legion Educational Services. During the war years thousands of

servicemen studied under a similar Legion educational plan.

LATE-SOWN CROPS, ROOTS, POTATOES

SECOND ESTIMATE: Canada's potato crop, this year will amount to 43.5 million hundredweight, down just under ten per cent from last year's revised estimate of approximately 48 million hundredweight, according to estimates released by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Both acreage and yield per acre have declined somewhat from last year, thus accounting for the drop in production. But the 1947 crop is still the fourth largest since 1934, with this year's average yield running three hundredweight per acre higher than the long-time average. Lower yields in the Maritimas this year are partly compensated for by increased production in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Production in Ont. and Quebec has declined almost a million hundredweight in each province, while the outturn in British Columbia is down rather less than a quarter of a million.

Sugar beet production this year is estimated at 627,000 tons, with acreage and anticipated production down in all producing provinces compared with last year's results. Production in 1946 was placed at 733,500 tons. Unfavourable seeding conditions, particularly in Ontario, contributed largely to the reduction in acreage. Weather conditions were not of the best for beet development during the growing season and as a result anticipated yields per acre are lower than last year in three out of the four producing provinces. Manitoba alone is expected to exceed last year's yield per acre of sugar beets.

Production of shelled corn has suffered a sharp decline with an outturn of only 6.7 million bushels in prospect as against last year's outturn of 10.7 million bushels. Unseasonable weather and moisture conditions in Ontario during the normal seeding period caused a drastic reduction in the 1947 acreage devoted to corn for shelling in that province. Although the Ontario crop is unusually late, anticipated yields per acre are only 10 per cent below last year. Manitoba's crop of shelled corn, at 263,000 bushels, is only slightly below that of a year ago.

Lower yields per acre more than offset a slight increase in Canada's dry pea acreage and production is expected to reach only 1.8 million bushels compared with the 1946 crop of 2.2 million bushels. With yields per acre down only fractionally from last year the dry bean crop at 1.6 million bushels exceeds the 1946 crop by a small margin. The increased outturn is due chiefly to a higher seeded acreage in Ontario.

Fodder corn acreage is up slightly from last year, but anticipated production at 3.7 million tons is below the 1946 estimate of just under four million tons. The decline is largely attributable to unfavourable growing weather in the central provinces. Alfalfa