

federal grants which are now offered to approved universities and colleges throughout Canada. Originally these grants were distributed by the Department of Finance, but in 1956 the Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, said that the Government of Canada proposed to double the grants and to ask the Conference to distribute them. The Conference was also to hold in trust any money that a university did not accept. The grants at that time amounted to some sixteen million dollars a year and a body handling this sum of money annually must have a legal existence. Consequently, on January 18, 1957 the NCCU became a chartered corporation.

Another development was the appointment of the Conference's first full-time executive secretary and the setting-up of a permanent office in Ottawa in September 1957. The staff, which was originally two, has grown to seven, including three who run a research and information service. This is at the present time financed largely by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

#### CHARTER SHORTCOMINGS

The charter of 1957 had to be obtained in a hurry to enable the federal grants to be made during the 1956-57 session, and subsequently, as one might expect, it was found to be in some ways unsuitable and cumbersome. Alternative plans were studied and, at the annual meeting held at the University of Alberta in June 1958, the future organization of the Conference was debated at length and major changes made. The former NCCU was expanded into the present National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges, with the intention of opening its membership to approved colleges not eligible under the former constitution, and at the same time a new body, the Canadian Universities Foundation, was set up to act as the executive and administrative agency of the Conference. The Foundation is made up of twenty-one heads of NCCUC universities and colleges, elected by and from the heads of all the member institutions.

It was anticipated that the new CUF would take over from the NCCU the job of distributing federal grants, but when this was written the Minister of Finance had not yet signed the necessary agreement and the former agreement is still in force. This means that the original NCCU is still alive and the Canadian universities as the moment have three organizations: the original NCCU, now existing only to distribute federal grants; the new NCCUC, an unincorporated body consisting of university administrators and teachers who meet annually "to promote higher education in Canada," and the CUF, a more purely administrative body.

Mr. J. Percy Page, B.A., B.C.S., has been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, succeeding the late Hon. J.F. Bowlen, who died December 16, 1959.

#### RETURN VISIT

Prime Minister and Mrs. John G. Diefenbaker have accepted the invitation to visit Mexico extended by the President and Mrs. Lopez Mateos during their visit to Ottawa in October.

Taking advantage of the Easter recess of Parliament, the Prime Minister and Mrs. Diefenbaker will fly to Mexico City to spend April 20 and 21 as Presidential guests. They look forward to visiting Mexico again and thereby contributing to the strengthening of the friendly relations between Mexico and Canada. Details of the programme will be announced when final arrangements have been made during April.

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#### COMMERCIAL AIR SERVICES

The Minister of Transport has announced a further extension of policy designed to provide for a more liberal granting of licences, and a more extensive degree of competition in the field of non-scheduled commercial air services.

Mr. Hees pointed out that he had announced to the House of Commons in July 1958, a more liberal policy in dealing with applications for licences for non-scheduled commercial air services involving small, light aircraft and small helicopters. It had, at that time, been decided that, except in very unusual circumstances, applications for air services in these categories would not be refused on grounds of protection of existing operators or restriction of competition but rather, would be made available on a liberal basis in accordance with the spirit of free enterprise.

Since that time the Air Transport Board, in exercising its licensing function under the Aeronautics Act, had operated in accordance with this policy. The results had been beneficial to the public as a whole in that it had removed any elements of unnecessary protection for services using small aircraft. Mr. Hees stated that he was satisfied that there had been a resultant increase in the amount of service available to the public in general by aircraft of this type.

Continuing review of this situation had led to the conclusion that the same policy should now be extended to apply to any non-scheduled charter services performed by helicopters, and also to any non-scheduled charter services performed by medium-sized aircraft (of the type defined by the Air Transport Board as Group B which, generally speaking, includes aircraft up to but not including the DC-3 size).

Mr. Hees stated he believed that it was in the public interest that, subject only to exceptions in unusual circumstances and providing the applicant qualified on other counts such as ownership, financial stability, technical competence, etc., licences in this

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