

Canadian Showcases in West Africa

CANADIAN business and industry will have an excellent opportunity to show their wares to West African buyers at Canada's first trade fairs in that area early next year. The first will open in Lagos, Nigeria, on January 17, continuing until January 28; the second, in Accra, Ghana, on February 14, ending on February 24.

The fairs, organized by the Department of Trade and Commerce, are entirely Canadian, with participation limited to Canadian firms and products. The sites in both capitals are easily accessible, and are developed to provide every facility needed for staging a successful trade fair.

The Lagos fair will be housed in five buildings erected for the Nigerian Independence Exhibition on Victoria Island. The focal point of the fair in Accra will be a Geodesic Dome, housing the government trade offices and informational displays. The centrally-located Old Polo Grounds will be used.

The booths will be from 100 to 300 square feet in size; other space will be available outside the buildings. The exhibits are being designed and executed by the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission.

Variety of Exhibits

One hundred and five Canadian firms will participate in the two trade fairs, showing products ranging from baby chicks to industrial camp trailers, from polio vaccine and X-ray equipment to kitchen ranges, from paints and resins to out-board motors.

The largest section will be the industrial display, with 34 companies showing aircraft models, tractors and passenger cars, among other products. Twenty-one firms will exhibit in the clothing and footwear section; eight in household-appliances; eight in textiles; seven in food products; five in sporting goods; and four in the hospital equipment and pharmaceutical section. A brewery, three distilleries and ten steel companies will also show their products.

An extensive publicity and advertising campaign is preceding the fairs. This is specially necessary, in order to give West Africans additional knowledge about Canada. Films, radio and television are of vital importance in this regard.

One factor that will make West African markets difficult to "crack" is the loyalty of the majority of their consumers to particular brands and products. Thus traditional suppliers enjoy a strong advantage over new ones. Canada may, however, enjoy a special advantage, since it is not only a fellow member of the Commonwealth but also a comparatively new nation.

Numerous press releases and articles on Canada have been prepared for the press of both Nigeria and Ghana by the Trade Publicity Branch, Department of Trade and Commerce. Special photographs will show scenes of Canadian life. Nigerian and Ghanaian young people studying at Canadian educational insti-