

## LABOUR-MANAGEMENT CO-OPERATION

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTED:** The Minister of Labour Mr. Humphrey Mitchell announces appointment by Order in Council of an Advisory Committee to assist the work of the Labour-Management Co-operation Service of the Department of Labour. The Service forms a section of the Industrial Relations Branch of the Department.

The Labour-Management Co-operation Service furthers the formation of industrial committees, comprising representatives of management and labour, for the study of production problems, the object being to increase and improve production.

The industrial committees established during the war did invaluable work in stimulating production and have been found equally useful in aiding the solution of peacetime production problems.

The Advisory Committee is composed of representatives of leading employer and employee organizations and will be under the chairmanship of J.G. Bisson, Chairman of the Unemployment Insurance Commission. Members of the Committee are: A.E. Hemming, Trades & Labour Congress of Canada; Pat Conroy, Canadian Congress of Labour; A. Gosselin, Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour; H. Smith, Railway Employees' Department, Division No. 4, American Federation of Labour; C. Willis George, Canadian Manufacturers' Association; R.G. Johnson, Canadian Construction Association; D.B. Chant, Ontario Pulp and Paper Makers' Safety Association; J.A. Brass, Railway Association of Canada.

The Order in Council naming the Advisory Committee reaffirmed the principles which should govern the organization and operation of labour-management production committees. These include: (1) equal representation for labour and management, (2) democratic selection of the labour representatives, (3) committees to be advisory and consultative only, with an adequate explanation to be provided when committee proposals cannot be adopted, and (4) problems of wages, working conditions and grievances to be left to the appropriate bargaining procedure and not dealt with by the committees.

## COST-OF-LIVING COMPARED

**EIGHT REGIONAL CITIES:** The Dominion Bureau of Statistics has released cost-of-living indexes for eight regional cities for December 1, 1947, as shown in the table below.

The Bureau points out that in interpreting the city cost-of-living indexes, two factors should be born in mind. First, they are on the base August 1939=100, and December 1 figures may be compared directly with the Dominion December 1 figure of 144.8. Second, they measure percentage changes in living costs for each city, but cannot be used to compare the

cost of maintaining the same standard of living from city to city.

The indexes are compiled from budgets appropriate for each city and these differed in cost in the base period, August 1939. For example, the Montreal index includes percentage changes for rent based mainly on rents of apartments and flats, while Toronto figures are calculated principally from single house rents.

The percentage changes for any one month vary considerably from city to city, but over a period of time they do not differ appreciably from the Dominion average of all cities.

City	December 1946	November 1947	December 1947
Halifax.....	125.1	140.6	141.8
Saint John.....	125.1	141.4	143.9
Montreal.....	129.1	146.3	148.6
Toronto.....	125.0	141.5	144.0
Winnipeg.....	123.2	139.2	140.8
Saskatoon.....	128.2	145.3	147.5
Edmonton.....	124.8	138.7	139.9
Vancouver.....	125.6	143.4	146.0

(August 1939=100)

## DISEASE ATTACKS BIRCH TREES

**MERCHANTABLE STANDS AFFECTED:** A disease known as birch dieback has been seriously affecting the birch stands in the Maritime Region of Canada for a number of years and is now threatening the merchantable stands of yellow and white birch in Quebec and Ontario, says the Agriculture Department. An insect known as the bronze birch borer is found attacking the affected trees and is largely responsible for their death. Studies by forest entomologists, however, have shown that the borer attack is dependent on a weakening of the trees by other causes. The possible causes are being investigated by forest pathologists and there is some evidence that the condition is initiated by a virus or fungous infection.

A recent survey by entomologists showed that in New Brunswick most stands of merchantable size are from 50 to 80 per cent dead. In areas cruised in Quebec yellow birch stands showed an average of 17 per cent dead. The greatest damage was in stands disturbed by previous cutting. A certain amount of mortality has always followed the exposure of birch by cutting but the present condition is found in all types except some young and vigorous stands. White birch was found to be in worse condition than yellow and a majority of the trees of this species over 8" in diameter were dead or dying.

In Ontario the yellow birch in mature virgin hardwood stands are in fairly good condition. As in Quebec, the percentage of white birch dead is higher and averages 15 per cent.

The Department says the disease was first noted in the south-central part of New Brunswick in 1935. The first symptoms are weak

foliage growth on the outer margin of the crown, being more conspicuous in the top. Twigs become bare, dying back from the ends. Later whole branches die, and in most cases eventually the whole tree. Since 1935 the disease has spread to Nova Scotia, Quebec, and the North Eastern States and large amounts of birch have been killed.

The present situation, the Department continues, emphasizes the need for closer use of hardwood stands, coupled with silvicultural management designed to maintain their vigor. Large areas of over mature stands not only represent a failure to use the productive possibilities of the forests, but the accumulated timber values of such stands are particularly vulnerable to destruction by insects and other organisms. The larger the areas the greater the danger of loss and the greater the difficulty of salvage. Stands of birch should be harvested at maturity; severe thinning operations should be avoided and where partial cutting is carried out the remaining birch should be harvested because serious decadence follows from exposure. In mixed wood stands operations for pulpwood should be combined with, or followed by, hardwood operations.

Birch is now extensively used for veneer, furniture, flooring, fuel, and for many other purposes. Its value has in recent years increased very considerably.

## ICAO STATISTICS

**NEW BASIS OF COLLECTION:** Rehabilitation of the machinery for collecting aviation statistics on a world-wide basis is the primary purpose of the first meeting of the Statistics Division of the International Civil Aviation Organization, which opened in Montreal Jan. 13.

Prior to 1939 the International Commission for Air Navigation, with headquarters in Paris, compiled and published the important statistical data it received from airline operators through the government agencies of its Member States on international airline operations. The meeting, which is being attended by statistical experts from Member States of ICAO, will review the work of the Organization in putting back into operation the statistical reporting machinery which lapsed into disuse during the war.

Another proposal to be considered by the Statistics Division is designed to reduce the heavy burden of paper work which is placed upon the airlines. Today all international air transport statistics are prepared, in the first instance, by the airline operators, who maintain large and costly administrative staffs for the purpose. As much of the data required in the international field is entered in airport records, as well as in airline records, the Division will consider means by which this information will flow automatically from the airports through the national governments to ICAO, the central office charged with

the collection and dissemination of all types of aviation statistics required for the efficient and economical operation of civil air transport across national borders.

The Montreal session is interested particularly in the standardization of the terms and definitions employed in aviation statistics. The variations in use today have caused considerable confusion, both for the aviation experts and for the general public. The significance of profit and loss statements, etc., is considerably diminished by the fact that the airline of various nations use different statistical and accounting definitions. The standardization of such terms is therefore an important consideration in the efficient use of the statistics which ICAO will collect and collate.

**HONG KONG GRAVES:** The Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, has made public the text of the following message received from Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Governor-General of Malaya:

Please tell our Canadian friends that today I visited the War Graves Cemetery where the Canadian defenders of Hong Kong lie buried. It is tended with loving care amidst scenery as magnificent and beautiful as any in the world. A spirit of peace broods over the hillside where these heroes lie asleep, and they are guarded by the eternal mountains and the sea.

## PEACE RIVER BRIDGE

**MAJOR REPAIRS PLANNED:** A major repair programme designed to restore the endangered north pier of the Peace River bridge, main link of the Alaska Highway, has already commenced in order that the work will be completed prior to the heavy spring run-off, announces Mr. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence.

The bridge, which is 2130 feet long with a centre span of 930 feet, crosses the Peace River between Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, B.C.

During the annual inspection by Army engineers last summer it was suspected that scouring action of the flowing water was undermining the north pier of the big suspension bridge. Further intensive investigation with the aid of divers revealed that a hole 30 feet square by eight feet deep had been scoured out underneath the pier.

Because of the importance of the bridge, which was built by the U.S. Public Roads Administration during the war at a cost of approximately \$4,000,000, an independent opinion was asked of Dr. P.L. Pratley, noted Canadian consulting engineer.

As a result of his report the present repair programme has been put into effect. This will base the whole concrete pier solidly on a firm foundation instead of resting on gravel.