

**RADIOACTIVE ISOTOPES:** Radioactive isotopes from the Chalk River atomic plant will be made available to foreign research workers for medical, physical, chemical and industrial purposes, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. Howe, announced on December 9.

Mr. Howe recalled that in September 1947 he had announced that radioactive isotopes would be made available to Canadian research workers and stated that since that time many Canadian scientific organizations had put these materials to good use in their researches. Canada, however, had not embarked on a general programme to supply isotopes to workers outside the country, as had the United States and Great Britain, since it was felt that the requirements of foreign workers could be adequately met through the American and British foreign distribution programmes.

Experiments had shown, however, that because of the high neutron flux of the Chalk River plant, Canada could supply certain isotopes in a more concentrated form than could the American and British organizations. This more active material was of great value in certain types of research. Consequently, in order to pass on to foreign scientists the advantages of having more active material, the Government, on the recommendation of the Atomic Energy Control Board, had decided to make radioactive isotopes from Chalk River available outside Canada.

#### TWENTY-SEVEN ISOTOPES

Mr. Howe stated that at the present time, some twenty-seven isotopes would be made available and it was hoped that still others would be available later. These isotopes were also available from the United States and the United Kingdom but in many cases the Canadian material could be supplied in a more concentrated form. Chalk River would shortly issue a catalogue listing the isotopes available and outlining the procedure for obtaining same. In the meanwhile, details could be obtained from the Isotopes Branch, Atomic Energy Project, National Research Council, Chalk River.

To ensure that isotopes supplied from this country were used for proper and peaceful purposes, the Government had attached certain conditions to the release of isotopes to foreign applicants. These conditions included a statement from the Atomic Energy organization of the applicant's country that his proposed research met with its approval and undertakings by the applicant's Government that the laboratories where his research was carried on would be open to inspection by qualified scientists regardless of nationality and that the results of his research would be published or otherwise made available to the Canadian Government.

**CONCILIATION BOARDS CHAIRMAN:** The Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell, announced on December 9 that he had appointed the Honourable Mr. Justice J.O. Wilson, of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Vancouver, to be third member and Chairman of each of two Boards of Conciliation and Investigation established under the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act to deal with disputes between a number of Canadian railways and groups of international and national unions.

One of the disputes, involving some 90,000 employees, affects the entire systems of the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, together with the Ontario Northland Railway and the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway Company, and a group of twelve international railway labour organizations. The other two members of the Board appointed to deal with this dispute are Mr. Isaac Pitblado, K.C., Winnipeg, and Mr. Alfred J. Wickens, K.C., Moose Jaw, who were appointed by the Minister on the nominations of the companies and unions respectively.

The other dispute, involving some 34,000 employees, affects the Canadian National Railways, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Ontario Northland Railway, on the employers' side, and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees and Other Transport Workers and the Brotherhood of Express Employees. The other two members of the Board appointed to deal with this dispute are Mr. T.R. Meighen, K.C., and Mr. J.A. Coote, both of Montreal, who were appointed by the Minister on the joint recommendations of the companies and unions respectively.

Mr. Mitchell said that he had appointed Mr. Justice Wilson as Chairman of the Boards of Conciliation in the absence of joint recommendations from the other two members of each of the Boards.

**FARM PRICES DOWN:** Farm prices of agricultural products moved downward in October for the fourth successive month, according to index numbers compiled by the Bureau of Statistics. The month's decrease brought the index to the lowest level since April last year.

The Bureau's all-Canada index, on the base 1935-39=100, is tentatively estimated at 246.8 as compared with 249.7 in September and 260.1 for October last year. The index stood at 242.6 in April, 1948. The estimated level for October is also below the annual average of 252.6 for 1948 but substantially above the average of 212.5 for 1947.

As compared with October last year, prices were lower for grains, livestock, dairy products, poultry and eggs, and higher for pota-

toes. Compared with the preceding month, they were lower for livestock, potatoes, poultry and eggs and slightly higher for dairy products.

**FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME:** On December 6 a programme for the development of Canada's commercial fisheries was announced in the House of Commons by the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Mayhew. The programme, which represents the culmination of many months of planning and of numerous discussions with all sections of the industry, marks a significant step forward in the history of fisheries progress in this country, the Department's "Trade News" reports.

Basically, the programme falls into two divisions: 1. Expansion of North American and overseas markets. 2. Industrial aid for special areas.

To help carry it out, three new branches will be established in the Department of Fisheries as quickly as proper personnel can be found. They will be (a) a fish Inspection Branch (b) a Technical Services Branch and (c) a Consumer Services Branch. All three branches will serve the Canadian fishing industry as a whole, although the work of the Technical Services Branch will be directed especially to the development of the areas of the East Coast where the fishery resources are not being fully utilized and where the incomes of fishermen are low.

Coincident with the announcement of the new programme, Mr. Mayhew outlined a change in the Department's policy on Atlantic Coast trawlers. Previously, licences for trawlers were issued only to Canadian-built ships. Under the new policy, the Minister stated, licences will be granted to new trawlers built in the United Kingdom as well as in Canadian yards.

**AIR AGREEMENT WITH DENMARK:** The Department of External Affairs has announced that a bilateral agreement for air service between Canada and Denmark was signed on December 13 in Ottawa. The Minister of Transport, Mr. Chevrier, signed on behalf of Canada, while Mr. G.B. Holler, Minister to Canada for Denmark, signed on behalf of his Government.

This agreement is similar to a previous agreement concluded by Canada with Sweden in 1947 and provides for the direct carriage of traffic between Canada and Denmark. Gander, Newfoundland, has been designated as the airport at which Denmark may exercise its traffic rights.

An airline owned by the Government of Denmark is a partner together with a Swedish and a Norwegian airline in the pooled Scandinavian Airlines System. This joint company has already been operating into Canada by virtue of the earlier agreement concluded with Sweden.

**BANK OF CANADA APPOINTMENTS:** Three new appointments were announced on December 12 by Graham Towers, Governor of the Bank of Canada. J.R. Beattie, formerly Chief of the Research Department, becomes Executive Assistant to the Governors. W.E. Scott, formerly Banking Assistant, goes to the post of Chief of the Research Department. R.B. McKibbin, who has been Deputy Chief of the Securities Department, becomes Securities Advisor.

All three officers involved in the appointments, announced on December 12, have been connected with the Bank of Canada since its formative years.

**HOME-BUILDING UP 25 P.C.:** The number of dwelling units completed in the first nine months of this year was up 25 per cent over the same period of 1948, while the number started fell off nearly five per cent, leaving the number under construction at the end of September slightly less than four per cent below the same date a year ago, according to the monthly estimate covering September by the Bureau of Statistics.

Total number of units completed in the nine months is estimated at 62,998 as against 50,238 in the same period of 1948, an increase of 12,760. In September 7,563 units were completed, up nearly 900 over the 6,667 last year. Starts in September totalled 10,035, down moderately from 10,651 last year, and for the nine months were 3,254 below last year at 67,862 compared with 71,116.

At the end of September this year, the number of dwelling units under construction was estimated at 61,115, showing a small decline from last year's estimate of 63,656 for unfinished dwellings at the same time.

**FARM LABOUR CONFERENCE:** Agriculturists from all parts of Canada are meeting at a two-day session of the seventh federal-provincial Farm Labour Conference which opened in Ottawa on December 15, according to announcement by the Minister of Labour, Mr. Mitchell.

Arthur MacNamara, Deputy Minister of Labour, addressed the opening meeting of the Conference. W.W. Dawson, Supervisor of the Immigration and Farm Placements Branch of the Department of Labour, is Chairman.

Among those to address the Conference is D.W. Fessenden of the United States Employment Service, Washington, D.C., who spoke on "The Federal-State Farm Labour Programme in the United States".

**WHEAT STOCKS:** Stocks of Canadian wheat in store or in transit in North America at midnight on December 1 amounted to 166,609,500 bushels compared with 169,979,200 on November 24 and 177,408,600 on the corresponding date last year.