

both contributed to the decline in value of 1953 exports, the easing of prices being the major factor. On average, prices of exports were more than 2.5% below the level of 1952, while the volume was down less than 1.7%. Average prices of imports were lower in the early months of the year than in 1952 but from June were above 1952 levels. On the average, however, they were lower than in 1952, and the gain in the volume of imports in 1953 was more than 9%.

* * * *

QUEEN ELIZABETH ISLANDS: The Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Mr. Lesage, announced in the House of Commons on February 5 that Her Majesty the Queen had been graciously pleased to allow that her name be given to the entire group of islands which lies north of Lancaster Sound and Viscount Melville Sound. Henceforth this northern half of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago is to be known as the Queen Elizabeth Islands.

Mr. Lesage said, in part:

"It seems particularly fitting that our present sovereign should allow her name to be permanently associated with this part of Canada. It was during the reign of her illustrious namesake that British seamen made their first voyages of discovery into what is now the Canadian Arctic. In the more than three and a half centuries which have passed since then, our Arctic has been widely explored and mapped. Now, in the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, we have every confidence that we are on the threshold of a new age, if not of discovery, then of development of our Arctic lands and seas.

"It was important for the sake of administrative convenience that these particular islands should have some collective name. They stretch in a great triangle whose base along the Arctic Ocean's polar pack is almost as wide as our three Prairie Provinces; to see even the outer edges of the group would require a flight of 2,300 miles. And yet these islands are in many ways a unit with its own peculiar conditions and problems. The lands themselves are, of course, the most northerly in North America and the most northerly of the Queen's realms. On their 160,000 square miles dwell less than 200 of her people, but beneath their surface may lie some of the richest treasures which we possess."

* * * *

SALUTE FOR QUEEN: Twenty-one gun Royal Salutes were fired by Active and Reserve Army artillery units at noon, February 6, at 13 traditional saluting stations across Canada to mark the second anniversary of the accession to the throne, of Queen Elizabeth II, Army Headquarters announced. The salutes were fired at all provincial capitals and at Ottawa, Vancouver and Montreal.

1953 PRICE TRENDS: Retail prices, as measured by the consumer price index, were notably stable in 1953 and averaged 0.9% lower than those prevailing in 1952. The level position of the index during the 12 months ending December, 1953 was a continuation of the plateau established during the latter half of 1952, although the slightly lower level in 1953 as compared to 1952, marked the first decline in the yearly average during the war and post-war period. The remarkable stability of the total consumer price index during 1953 may be judged from the fact that at no time during the year was the index more than 1% from the annual average of 115.5. This reflected both stable prices within certain areas of the index and compensating upward and downward movements between other areas, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics reported on February 2.

The total index dipped from 115.8 at December 1, 1952 to 114.4 at May 1, 1953, rose to 116.7 over the next five months and returned to 115.8 on December 1, 1953. The two main turning points at May and October can be traced to movements of the food index which largely determined the pattern of the total index. The steady fall in the food component from 114.1 at December, 1952 to 110.1 at May, was mainly attributable to declines in beef, vegetable, and butter prices. Increases for eggs, pork, bread, flour and coffee, contributed to the rise in the level of the food index between May and October when it reached a high for the year of 115.5.

In the shelter group, steady fractional gains were recorded in all months except March. This was a continuation of the movement of this series since early 1950. Both rent and home-ownership contributed to the advance with rent maintaining a slight edge over the other series throughout the year. On average, the clothing index was 1.5% lower in 1953 than in 1952, with four of the five sub-group indexes averaging from 1.1 to 2.6% lower.

* * * *

EMPLOYMENT DECLINE: Industrial employment showed a further decline at December 1 when the Bureau's preliminary index, on the 1949 base, stood at 113.9 as compared with 115.9 a month earlier and 116.1 at December 1, 1952. The expenditures in weekly payrolls fell by 1.6% in the month, but were 2.4% above those reported at the same time in 1952. The advance figure of average weekly wages and salaries, in the major industrial groups, at \$58.19, slightly exceeded the previous maximum of \$58.14 at November 1. Earnings recorded at December 1, 1952, averaged \$56.12.

* * * *

The primary iron and steel industry sales reached a record \$504,000,394 in 1952, more than twice as much as five years earlier, over three times as much as in 1946.