

# Wheels of Industry Geared Up to War, Howe Tells Canada

Supply Orders Average \$4,000,000 Weekly, Minister Says; Air Training Plan to Require 4,000 Planes; Tenders Called for 72 Boats

## URGES ZEAL IN 'SECOND FRONT LINE'

Ottawa, Jan. 7 (CP).—Orders placed to date by the War Supply Board amount to about \$65,000,000, exclusive of \$25,000,000 for railway equipment, Transport Minister Howe said tonight.

Outlining activities of the board in a broadcast address, Mr. Howe called it "the General Staff of Canada's second front line," and said it was "entrusted with the spending of almost terrifying sums of money."

The Transport Minister's address was one of a series by Cabinet Ministers on Canada's war effort. He spoke over a national network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Previously Prime Minister Mackenzie King and Defense Minister Rogers were heard.

Mr. Howe said War Supply Board orders let to date represent the productive effort of 45,000 men working a full year. And in regard to the British Commonwealth air training plan he figured more than 4,000 planes would be needed, the supplying of which is a War Supply Board responsibility. New shipbuilding calls for \$17,000,000 expenditure.

### Fight on Two Fronts.

In this war, the Transport Minister said, Canada must fight on two fronts. On the first—overseas—Canadians soon will stand shoulder to shoulder with troops of Great Britain and France, facing the Rhine.

On the second front—at home in Canada—men and women must carry on the fight with equal enthusiasm, determination and vigor if those on the first front are to receive the support necessary for victory.

As Transport Minister, Mr. Howe said, he was responsible to the Government and the people for the War Supply Board, "which is charged with the task of organizing Canada's second front line."

"Upon the soundness of its planning and the efficiency of its operation, success or failure of the campaign at home depends.

"It is vested with administrative authority more sweeping and more powerful than has even been given to any agency of government in this country.

"It has the right to let contracts; it has the right to cancel contracts and to place them elsewhere, if, in its opinion, a contractor proves incapable of fulfilling commitments.

"It has the power to take over the management of any industrial plant if, in its judgment, incompetence or unwillingness is imperiling the war effort of the nation."

### Advised by Experts.

Already, he said, under the chairmanship of Wallace Campbell, a dollar-a-year-man and president of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, the board has become a finely adjusted piece of machinery. It has associated itself with experts drawn from industry, commerce and the legal and technical professions from coast to coast.

Each problem comes before an expert. Each decision is made on its merits.

"It is placing from 400 to 500 orders a week, with an average weekly total expenditure of about \$4,000,000," said Mr. Howe. "This is a high-g geared purchasing pace, and must be exceeded as large orders now impending are placed.

"The sum of money represented in orders now placed for war supplies amounts to about \$65,000,000; and in addition the board has expended \$25,000,000 for railway locomotives and cars, for rental to railroads as insurance that Canada's merchandise, munitions and men can be kept rolling to seaports, on their way toward the first front line."

One important problem of the board has been the outfitting of men in Canada's armed services and

wherever there is a lack of uniforms it is rapidly being rectified.

Canadian industry is turning out jackets of the sweater type at 10,000 a week; blankets, 20,000 a week; boots, 13,000 pairs a week; gloves, 13,000 dozen pairs a week; uniforms, 7,000 a week; socks, 12,000 pairs a week; underwear, 19,000 suits a week; greatcoats, 3,500 a week.

These figures, said Mr. Howe mean that Canada's peacetime production of gloves, for instance, has been expanded tenfold, and blanket production more than tripled.

In addition to making purchases for Canada, the War Supply Board also handles purchases in Canada for the British and French Governments.

"I doubt if any Canadian has assumed as heavy responsibilities for expenditure of public monies," said Mr. Howe.

Also, in addition to purchasing problems involved in meeting personal requirements of Canadian troops, the War Supply Board

the larger questions of purchasing machines and munitions of war; the magnitude of the recently announced air training plan predicated a supply problem which "will challenge the best effort of the board."

"This training scheme will require the use of some eighty aerodromes, housing accommodation for school and personnel and several thousand aeroplanes," said Mr. Howe.

Canada already has some for aerodromes ready for immediate use and to provide the forty new aerodromes survey parties have been working in all nine Provinces examining and mapping locations. Contracts for development will be placed so that work can start as soon as weather permits.

"Of training planes required, 1,282 will be wholly manufactured in Canada except for engines," Mr. Howe said. "Eight hundred and seventy complete aircraft are on order in England and will be assembled in Canada, and 593 aircraft are being manufactured in the United States.

"In addition, 1,622 aircraft, less wings, are on order in England. Wings for these will be manufactured in Canada and the aircraft will be assembled here. Aircraft deliveries from abroad are expected to start in May."

When the training program is at its peak it is expected between 3,000 and 4,000 aeroplane engines must be overhauled during a period of twelve months and the war supply board is organizing the Canadian aircraft industry for this work.

Also a large shipbuilding program is in process of organization, divided into three parts: small wooden boats, larger speedboats and naval vessels.

Tenders have been invited for

some 72 boats, from 18-foot power dinghies to steel ships of the British whale-catcher design, involving expenditure of about \$17,000,000.

"Our shipbuilding industry will have its hands full in meeting the required delivery dates," said the Transport Minister. "Both the Canadian and British Government will share in this program."

War buying, he added, is a difficult task and in every war there has been a series of scandals connected with purchases. He hoped such would not now be the case.

"In this war Canada is making every effort to prevent dishonesty, inefficiency and profiteering. I feel that our war purchasing machinery will prove itself capable of doing a job that will win the approval of the Canadian people," he said.

### Surplus Transport Blessing.

Were it not for Canada's adequate transportation system, mobilization of the country's industrial capacity would be impossible, and Mr. Howe held the surplus of transportation that contributed to the railway problem in peacetime would be Canada's salvation in time of war.

In the first Great War railway traffic rose 50 per cent above pre-war levels, a new high up to that time. In 1928, added the Transport Minister, Canadian railways handled 30 per cent more traffic than in 1917, peak period of the last war.

"What was done in 1928 can be done again," he said. "Already our

railways have had a sudden increase in traffic of some 25 per cent, and have handled the situation in a manner that has been a credit to every railway man."

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