TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming

A proposal that 20 per cent excise tax be eliminated from fur garments retailing under $400 is being prepared by the Rabbit Dressers Institute of New York for the presentation to the proper United States Government agencies. They claim that the government would definitely not lose any revenue through such a change because the dressers' business would be increased and resulting higher income taxes would more than compensate for the loss of the excise tax revenue. The reason the $400 figure was selected is that the government might consider that furs under $400 are utility articles rather than luxury articles so they believe that is the proper figure to work for in tax elimination. If a similar government ruling could be introduced in Canada it would also have the effect of popularizing the lower priced furs and certainly would help silver fox at this stage. However, it is a pretty hard proposition to induce governments to change their tax schedules and it would take a lot of time and agitation to bring it about.

The Great Lakes Mink Association of the United States state that the number of ranch mink available for the opening market in December promises to be greater than a year ago. Last year the group's 2,000 membership produced and sold over 385,000 pelts. They expect the opening in December to be strong and active. Optimism is based on the fact that though the demand for standard mink skins is currently small, not even this demand can be met at the moment since pelts are not available, consequently ranchers say they expect good prices when the market opens. Just when the bulk of the pelts will be sold no one would guess. "It depends entirely how retail fur sales go," stated Mr. Loffman of the Great Lakes Mink Association. Last year the greatest number were sold in the March to mid-July period.

Prospects are for European consumption of furs to increase in the next year, states Arthur F. Frayling, manager of the London Fur Department of the Hudson's Bay Company in an interview. Steady progress in the economic development of the continent was noted by Mr. Frayling as a favorable sign for strong European demand for furs. With the exception of France, which early this year placed an import curb on furs, the continent is gradually regaining its pre-war strength as a fur customer, he said. Though the stiff registration of French purchases of furs from London was a severe blow to the London fur trade, London auction houses have had a successful year and that city is fast regaining its reputation as a leading fur centre. In London itself the 100 per cent purchase tax placed on furs by the government still remains an almost unsurmountable barrier to the manufacturing trade of Great Britain. However, recently the government reduced the tax on fur trimmings from 100 per cent to 25 per cent. This is expected to give a good deal of impetus to the fur trimming manufacture trade.

Our comment on the above is of the change World War II has made with regard to furs. After World War I the London market was an open one and the writer can still recall sitting with Mr McLure in the Hudson's Bay Company auction room, which would be filled with over a thousand buyers from all over Europe vigorously bidding on silver fox and other furs. There were no restrictions then; but World War II and the economic conditions which followed it, created such conditions that the breeders of silver fox cannot find a market for their wares. France could take the whole production of European countries if trade barriers were removed, not that the French people would wear them all, but the visitors to Paris were always good buyers of silver fox.

In the latest issue of Life, the most popular illustrated magazine in the United States, there appears a full length photograph of Mrs. John M. Menzies wearing a draped sheath of platinum satin, worn with a luxurious platinum fox stole. She is a beautiful young woman and the stole appears to be made from four platinum skins and is certainly very attractive. Then on another page is a flashlight picture of Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, wife of the candidate for Republican President, and Mrs. Pat Nixon, wife of candidate for Republican Vice-President, watching their husbands as they appear on the platform, and below is this caption: "In the chilly night Mamie (Mrs. Eisenhower) shares her fur with cloth-coated Pat Nixon, as the wives mistily watch their husbands at Wheeling, Pa." The furs are two large platinum fox pelts.

The report on the autumn general auction of the Hudson's Bay Company held in London has just been received. In the foreword it states: "There was a fair attendance of buyers at the Company's general auction sale and purchases were mainly for the continental and local markets. The offering was comprehensive and of average quality for the time of year. The sizeable collections of musquash, squirrel and beaver in particular sold well, the two former showing an advance in price of 10 per cent compared with the Company's July, 1952, auction sale. The blue and silver fox collections were mainly withdrawn as on this auction were the American staple articles, due no doubt to the continued import restrictions in France.

Looking over the fox section we note that the offering of 3,338 blue foxes was withdrawn. The 2,265 cross foxes were mainly withdrawn; 464 Pearl Platina fox pelts sold well with the following prices: Canadian selected, £10 to £12; good, £7 15s to £9 10s; ordinary £5 10s to £7. The top price of £12 would equal in our money about $33. The silver fox catalogue of 11,031 skins was withdrawn. Mutation mink sold well, silverblu males sold up to 222 shillings (about $30.) Ranch mink advanced 10 per cent. The offering was all Scandinavian.

4,275 Canadians Pick Spuds In Me.

OTTAWA, Oct. 1° — (CP) — An army of 4,275 Canadian workers has been cleared across the United States border for potato picking in the State of Maine in one of the largest such movements since the Second World War, the Labor Department said Tuesday.

The workers were recruited by the National Employment Service. A total of 2,610 of them came from Quebec and 1,665 from New Brunswick points.

The movement south, the department said, is part of a reciprocal scheme planned by Canadian and American labor officials. Earlier this year combines and crews from the United States came north to assist in harvesting the Western Canadian grain crop. Also some 1,600 U. S. tobacco workers came to Canada to help with the tobacco harvest.

-NEWSY NOTES-

By J. A. Clark, D.Sc.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

A great deal of the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization is not new. Governments and Organizations have done much to improve agricultural production in other lands. Outstanding work has been accomplished by religious missionaries, involving great personal sacrifices and loss of life in several instances. Mr. Neil Vickerson, from the Charlottetown Experimental Station, died at the Penial Hall Farm, in Bolivia, after a few years of service with the Aymara Indians, a tribe that had been serfs, to establish themselves on their own farms. Some large industries and private foundations have carried on pioneer work in the improvement of farming methods in other lands. Governments when requested have sent experts to assist other countries and give advice on the improvement of agriculture. They have also provided both fellowships and scholarships for this purpose.

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All these efforts, however, had been on a comparatively small scale, with little or no effort at co-ordination. The pressing needs of the world today has called forth a practical sort of international service with clear cut aims and co-ordinated action. It is in this great field that FAO has assumed leadership. Each of its technical workers is very carefully briefed concerning the area or country to which he is going and also regarding the attitudes an international servant must have toward the people and the work. This same policy is also carried out in connection with those receiving fellowships and scholarships so that they may adapt themselves to the conditions they meet.

One of the very encouraging experiences in connection with the work is the readiness of the farmers and peasants to adopt new ways and methods when they are shown by the field experts. Many of them are as quick to learn as anyone and they have the spirit and attitude to succeed if they have the chance. It has also been noted that practically every country asking assistance has excellent scientists and technicians in government service. Their numbers, however, are usually entirely inadequate for the task.

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We have only space here to give a few examples as to the carrying out of this work by the FAO.: The growing of cotton is very important in Afghanistan as it provides one of the few sources of cash income. To improve the quality and the quantity of this major export product Afghanistan asked FAO for skilled help. They sent a practical producer from a large cotton growing area in America to demonstrate, with different varieties of cotton on plots at the Experiment Station at Kunduz, and at four other places in Afghanistan. He was also to try different fertilizers and do the familiar things he had found would produce more efficient crops. He did not find any suitable tools for planting or handling a crop. He did not have any time before planting should be started to order any, so he developed tools that served the purpose. To quote from his notes:

"We started planting cotton today and planted four jiribs. In this way I will have the land here at Kunduz planted in eight days.

"We are using rakes to open or take off the top of the ridges down to the water line. Then using a hand plow with spring teeth, which I made here in Kunduz, to make a furrow for planting, a man following dropping seed, followed by another man with a rake covering the seed. After about half an hour the laborers were planting as if they had been doing it this way all their lives, whereas in reality they had never seen anything like this, much less done it.

"This afternoon I had a visit from 65 farmers who came out to see how I irrigated and the method I used in planting. We saved a small plot to demonstrate to them. I stood in the middle and talked for about an hour. I have never seen people take as much interest as these people did. Several asked after it was over if they planted small plots, as I did, would I help them... It is a wonderful feeling to realize that they think as much of my work as they do". In a later report he said:

"I next inquired about common garden hoes that would be needed in the cultivation of the cotton. I was told that they didn't have any — but if I would design one, the shop of the sugar factory would make them for me. I got together with Abdullah, the chief engineer of the sugar factory, and laid one out. He had it made. After seeing the first hoe, I told him I would like 100 made and sent to me at Kunduz. These are the first light hoes these people have ever seen." He was told the workers would ruin the cotton if they tried to use these hoes in the blocking of the cotton

He reported:

"We set to work training the men to use the hoes. Less than two hours later I had 40 hoes going in the field, and in four hours the men were perfectly at home, using the hoes as though they had been using them all their lives. In planting his cotton ridges the only available tools were shovels." He wrote:

"Did you ever hear of making ridges or rows with shovels? Well, it certainly is a new wrinkle for mee, but I did not see any other way to do the work and get a crop planted this year." In describing his plans for the future he said:

"I hope to get eight agricultural students soon and begin training them. In this way I will have someone to put out on the demonstrations next year, and enlarge these plots where I can carry on variety tests of different types of cotton, as well as demonstration of cultivation and fertilization. This land is ideally constructed for tractor farming, which I would like to introduce as soon as the people are ready."

At least five other FAO projects are underway in Afghanistan.

A program was started in Ethiopia in 1947 by UNRRA to control cattle diseases, dealing particularly with one of their greatest agricultural problems, rinderpest. In connection with this work FAO has sent there four veterinarians from four different countries to supervise the work of vaccinating the cattle, and marking the ones treated. Ethiopians that have been trained are doing the work. We expect to write further on this important subject as carried on in several countries by F.A.O.

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At the request of the Ethiopian Government Dr. E. S. Archibald was secured by FAO to advise that country on matters of agricultural policy and make specific recommendations concerning agricultural projects. We have learned that Ethiopia has asked for an extension of his stay with them.

Pakistan, perhaps, because of the fact that it is facing many unusually severe problems in connection with its partition from India and its responsibility for millions of refugees, has asked for assistance. More than a year ago the Director General of FAO wrote in his report: "Our technical assistance projects in Pakistan are only beginning and in some cases are still in the planning stage as this report is written. I should like, nevertheless, to outline the program, which involves all of our major fields of work, because it might be of considerable interest to other countries." At that time FAO was sending 30 experts to Pakistan. It also included 38 fellowships for officials and technical personnel.

FAMOUS MONUMENT

The Statue of Liberty in New York harbor rises 305 feet above the water line.

$500,000 Icebox, Three Fishing Craft For Ceylon

OTTAWA, Oct. 16 — (CP) — Canada will provide Ceylon with gifts of a $500,000 refrigeration plant and three fishing vessels as part of a million-dollar Canadian plan to rehabilitate Ceylon's fishing industry.

The money is coming out of Canada's $25,000,000 contribution this year to help boost the economic structure in South and Southeast Asia under the six-year $5,000,000,000 Commonwealth Colombo Plan.

Negotiations now are under way, the Trade Department announced Tuesday, to buy one of the ships—a 145-foot deep-sea trawler costing some $145,000—in the United Kingdom.

The other two vessels, to cost about $45,000 each and equipped with diesel motor and radio, will be built by Sterling Shipyards Limited of Vancouver, the department announced. They are expected to be ready by Christmas.

Still under consideration is awarding of a contract for the fish refrigeration plant which will be built in Canada.

Altogether, this fishing equipment and extended technical assistance on how to harvest the tropical seas around the islands is expected to cost about $1,000,000. There likely will be other aid to Ceylon bringing Canada's total contribution to that country to about $3,000,000.

The remainder of the $25,000,000 will be split between India and Pakistan. With the exception of $5,000,000 worth of wheat which Canada will provide for India, spending of the remainder of the Colombo Plan funds has not been decided.

The Ceylon fisheries project was sparked by the efforts of Donald M. Aywood of Vancouver, a British Columbia Packers Limited official, who went to Colombo a year ago as consultant to the Ceylon Fisheries Ministry.

BIG IMPROVEMENT

MONTREAL — (CP)—This city's first death from diphtheria this year brought from health director Dr. Adelard Groulx the statement that "before we began immunization in 1927, Montreal's death rate from the disease was 30 per 100,000. Last year it was 0.4." The city had four diphtheria deaths in 1951.

SMALL VOTE

SHELBURNE, N. S.—(CP)—Only 30 ratepayers out of more than 500 cast votes at a meeting on the proposed borrowing of $7,500 for street repair work. The vote was 19 to 11 in favor.

POTATO LICENSING REGULATIONS

Effective at once the following Potato Licensing regulations are in effect and must be observed.

ALL DEALERS who ship or export potatoes from this province should have a Dealer's license from the Potato Board.

ALL DEALERS AGENTS, or ASSEMBLERS, who buy or load potatoes should have an Assembler's License.

ALL TRUCKERS who transport potatoes from this province in loads exceeding 2,000 pounds should have an Export Trucker's License.

ALL POTATO GROWERS should register as such with the Potato Board and should not sell potatoes until they have obtained a Producer's License. Application for Producers' Licenses should be made either to the office of the Potato Board at Charlottetown or to the following Board Agents:

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J. E. Foley
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O'Leary Farmers Co-op.
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Ellerslie Co-operative
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Wellington Co-operative
Wellington, P. E. I.

Summerside Co-operative
Summerside, P. E. I.

Kensington Dairy Co-op
Kensington, P. E. I.

Crossman & Bradshaw
Albany, P. E. I.

Abegweit Co-operative
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Kings County

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Ronald R. MacDonald
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William Whiteway
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Cardigan Co-operative
Cardigan, P. E. I.

Morell Co-operative
Morell, P. E. I.

Dingwell & Rossiter
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St. Peters Co-operative
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Queens County

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Fredericton, P. E. I.

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North Rustico, P. E. I.

Cherry Valley Co-op.
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Vernon River Co-op.
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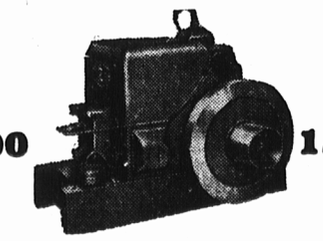
149.00  149.00

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