

Says Contributions To Fund Have Slowed Down To Trickle

SPRINGHILL, N.S. (CP)—Contributions to the 1958 Springhill Disaster Relief Fund have slowed to a trickle, treasurer H. J. Pike said Wednesday.

The amount deposited in the bank here to date is \$377,392, he said. Canadians have contributed more than \$1,500,000 to the relief of the stricken town where an Oct. 23 cave-in took the lives of 75 miners.

Bulk of the money to the national fund is deposited at the Royal Bank of Canada in Montreal.

Mr. Pike said in an interview his committee "couldn't do any-

Half Canada's Oil And Gas Drilling Rigs Stand Idle

By KEITH KINCAID
Canadian Press Staff Writer
CALGARY (CP)—Western Canada drilling rig operators are taking a hard look at the future of the oil and gas industry and wondering how they can move

half their equipment off the storage lots and back to work. Statistics compiled by the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors show that on Dec. 15 only 156 of Western Canada's 331 rigs were operating.

Each cost \$200,000. This means an equipment investment of \$34,800,000 is not earning money and 2,800 men, 16 to operate each, are unemployed or have been transferred to other work.

The statistics show a drop of 66 from the number of rigs working in mid-December last year and a drop of almost 50 per cent from the autumn of 1956 when 304 rigs were working, an all-time record.

LACK OF INCENTIVE
Oilmen and drilling officials say the cause of the idleness is a combination of over-expansion by the drilling companies and a lack of incentive on the part of oil companies to hire drillers to search for oil and gas.

A. Scove Murray, a drilling engineer with Imperial Oil, said gas drilling has shown no worthwhile increase in the number of rigs used since 1952, despite completion of two gas pipelines, the Trans-Canada and Westcoast Transmissions.

He said there is no foreseeable improvement in oil export conditions. Threat of new oil import restrictions, expected to be imposed by the United States in 1959, has cut into exploratory drilling and will continue to do so for several years.

ONLY 180 IN 1957?
He said Canadian consumption can be expected to increase by only six per cent a year and predicted by 1963 there will be only 180 rigs operating unless the export picture improves.

He suggested oil, gas and drilling companies seek more economical drilling methods. The number of wells depends on production demands but the drilling contractor who can cut his cost releases money for more drilling contracts.

Another oil company official said drilling rig operators over-expanded during the 1956 Suez crisis when there was a threat Middle East oil would be cut off. Some drilling companies are in difficulty because they went out on a limb during a false economy.

Slack periods in the drilling industry create hardships in other sections of the western economy. Communities near the oil fields, wholesalers and municipal governments also suffer.

MADE A STUDY
During the peak period in 1956, the drilling association made a study of the benefits individual communities received from the industry.

It reported Western Canada communities received \$36,000,000 a year as a result of drilling operations in their area, an average of \$10,000 a month from each rig. Of this amount \$8,000 was spent in wages and the balance for trucking and fuel and hardware, all paid for in local communities.

Municipal taxes in Alberta ran to \$3,000 for each rig. With about 130 rigs idle in Alberta, it means a tax loss of about \$380,000.

SECOND SECTION

Grain Shipments Up, Ore Down On Great Lakes

FORT WILLIAM, Ont. (CP)—One of the fastest freeze-ups on record has halted vessel movements from the Lakehead after an eight-month season that saw a sharp increase in grain traffic but a decline in ore shipments.

Total grain shipments were estimated Wednesday at 323,300,000 bushels compared with 276,300,000 last year.

Ore shipments totalled 1,339,391 tons, more than 1,000,000 less than in 1957.

Ice formed almost overnight Friday Dec. 12 and by Saturday it was clear the season was at an end, a day earlier than 1957 season closed.

A. J. Linford, district manager of the Canada Steamship Lines, said the speed and severity with which the winter hit had not been equalled in 40 years.

"It all happened within 24 hours," he said. "Clear sailing one day—heavy ice the next." The season opened April 18.

Bank Of Canada Interest Up

OTTAWA (CP)—The Bank of Canada interest rate this week was 3.81 per cent, up from 3.77 last week, the Central Bank reported Thursday.

The new figure compares with 3.32 per cent two weeks ago.

The rate is set at one-quarter of one per cent above the average yield from short-term government treasury bills which was 3.56 per cent this week.

Crawford said Wednesday. "I'm tired of loafing."

He worked regularly seven days a week as a stationary engineer at the Dosco holdings. His job was to look after the giant turbines which produce the compressed air that powers the equipment used by the miners.

The Crawfords have one son, David, who is a member of the Moncton volunteer fire department.

BANK HELD UP
BRANTFORD, Ont. (CP)—An armed man held up the Bank of Montreal branch in nearby St. George Wednesday and got away with an amount of cash believed to be less than \$1,000. It was the second holdup of the same bank within 14 months.



RIDDLE IN THE SNOW

This bewildering record of passage in the freshly fallen snow caught the eye of Toronto photographer Richard Cole who on assignment to shoot some winter scenes in the Toronto area. He and his pilot had been in the air for about an hour when their plane passed over this farm north of the city. Was it a busy farmer or playful children? Cole doesn't know. He used a Speed Graphic with a setting of F:8 at 1:1,000 to capture this unusual winter scene.

Consider U. S. Attitude To Red China Unchanged

By GEORGE KITCHEN
Canadian Press Staff Writer
WASHINGTON (CP)—If he would only tip his cap in the direction of Washington, retiring Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse-tung might be able to enhance the chances that the United States might some day recognize Red China.

At least, that's the impression gained here in the welter of speculation over word that Mao is giving up leadership of the government to devote more time to his job as Communist party head.

Lincoln White, the state department's official spokesman, was asked Wednesday whether Mao's impending departure from the government scene might increase the chances of U.S. recognition.

"No," said White, then he added somewhat bitterly: "In leaving his post, Mr. Mao did not tip his cap gracefully in the direction of the United States."

What White may have had in mind was that Mao might, in retiring from public life, have made some conciliatory gesture towards the U.S.

The U.S. view is that Mao's resignation as chairman of the Red regime has no effect whatsoever on his control over either the government or the Chinese Communist party, of which he retains leadership. It does not, the state department feels, represent any diminution of Mao's already vast powers over the Chinese people.

The feeling here is that Mao plans, in devoting more time to party duties, to strengthen the party's hold on the Chinese peasantry. The state department says it has received reports of popular resentment against what it called "extreme repression" by the Red regime.

But, while it confirms reports of unrest behind the Iron Curtain, the department obviously does not agree with Nationalist Chinese spokesmen who say they see Mao's resignation as the beginning of the end of Communist control on the China mainland.

The U.S. long has held that it cannot even consider recognition of Red China until it releases a number of Americans, both missionaries and servicemen, being held prisoner there on a variety of charges.

It also would have, U.S. officials say privately, "immediate and very adverse" popular effects in the U.S. where government policy is so closely tied to non-recognition. Deep resentment, they say, likely would develop among the American people.

Several reasons are given for the shorter supply this year. One is caution against another surplus. Another is that cold weather and snow have hampered cutting in northern states and in Canada.

THIRD REASON
A third reason, advanced by Edwin Grove, secretary-treasurer of the Maine Christmas Tree Association, is that widespread attacks last year of balsam needle gall midge made this year to give trees a chance to recover.

G. W. I. Creighton, Nova Scotia deputy lands commissioner, estimated that the province's Christmas tree export this year would be about 75 per cent of last year's.

He blamed the needle midge blight, rigid inspection demands in the New York market, and a general insistence on better-quality trees. Cold weather and muddy conditions also hampered the Nova Scotia harvest.

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