

Minister Reviews Problems In Training Of Mechanics

"I am satisfied that we have the most difficult snow conditions to deal with any Province in Canada," said Hon. J. George MacKay, Minister of Highways, who returned recently from attending the annual Good Roads Association of Canada Convention which was held at Saskatoon.

During the convention Mr. MacKay told of how Prince Edward Island is attempting to solve its mechanical training problems.

He recalled that last winter was a tough one for the snow fighting equipment of the Province caused by a more or less continuous series of storms and drifting which resulted in hard packed snow. He told the convention that while in the neighboring provinces the snow plows went through the winter without removing the paint from the wings island plows worn completely through the eighth inch blades and had to be patched to keep them in service.

This continual backing of heavy drifts, Mr. MacKay said, soon began to show other evidence of wear and tear on the road equipment. The machines were tied up for considerable periods of time and sometimes did not give continuous service after repairs had been effected.

An appeal to the Good Roads Association of Canada brought immediate response and through their managing director, C.W. Gilchrist, a committee was set up to handle the problem.

CHANGING MADE

This investigation which started in May continued until mid July. As a result of it the Department made changes in truck maintenance procedure, snow plow repairs and operator training in the field and shop.

One thing the investigation showed, Mr. MacKay said, was the problem caused by the lack of skilled mechanics and operators. It was concluded if the Department was to have a sufficient supply of skilled men they must train them themselves.

Mr. MacKay went on to tell of the co-operation the Department received from various machinery companies and the Department of Education who agreed to include additional mechanical courses in the vocational school.

The Good Roads association, listed six contributory factors to unsatisfactory conditions in the mechanical branch of the Department.



MR. MacKAY AT C.G.R.A. IN SASKATOON

DISCUSSED PROBLEMS

The CGRA committee discussed equipment operating costs, and downtime at length, noting that the committee report indicated that extra garage accommodation was a requirement coupled with better use of the present space.

Staff problems also received the attention of the investigators Mr. MacKay said.

"We were shown six reasons for high turnover," the P.E.I. Minister declared, "reflecting conditions which I now know should not have existed, and which I intend to correct."

"Step by step they combed our set-up and told us what, in their view, should be done to improve it. Leaving nothing to chance, they added to the report the following appendices:

1. Suggested classification of garage employees.
2. Proposed basis for rating tradesmen.
3. Proposed basis for rating operators.
4. Proposed organization (chart) and functions of the Mechanical Branch.
5. Some training aids and reference material available.
6. Suggested subjects for inclusion in a basic training syllabus.

"After that they added a supplement called, (Suggested instruction, procedures, test forms, etc., for use in conjunction with an operator training program).

RECOMMENDATIONS

"These recommendations are as follows:

1. Reorganize the Mechanical

Branch into four sections.

2. Make full use of established employee selection methods reclassify employees, establish new wage brackets and rate employees. Establish employee files and record cards. I may say that we are already at work on this one. Reclassification of employees has been applied and I believe we have already attracted better men as a result.
3. Continue and intensify the operator training program.
4. Establish a basic training program under the guidance of a training officer.
5. Revise maintenance and repair policies and practices in line with manufacturers' recommendations. (We have gone along with this during the past summer with good effect.)
6. Develop policy with respect to economic repair and replacement of equipment. (This also has been started.)
7. Rearrange garage layout and provide new office and training facilities. (This is in the planning stage.)
8. Sublet certain types of repair as the need arises. (We are now subletting all our truck work and some engine overhaul of heavy equipment.)
9. Review parts stock with a view to reducing inventory.
10. Provide a system of maintenance history cards for ready reference and control.

PRODUCE

MONTREAL (CP)—Agriculture department quotations:

Eggs: Wholesale dealers prices to country stations, wooden cases, extra-large 62-63; large 60-61; medium 60-61; small 30-31; B 35-36; C 21. Receipts: 301.

Butter: Current receipts, 56%; fresh-grade creamery prints job price 62½-63½; fresh wholesale 60½-61.

Cheese: F.O.B. factory, Ontario white 34; colored 34; delivered Montreal, Quebec white 30½, colored 30½; wholesale Ontario white 35½; colored 35½; wholesale Quebec white 31½; colored 31½.

Potatoes: Quebec 75¢ 1.00-1.25; N.B. 75¢ 1.35-1.50; N.E. 10¢ 22-24; N.E. 50¢ .85-95; P.E.I. 75¢.

GRAIN

WINNIPEG (CP)—Flax prices firmed up in late trade Wednesday on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. Other grains held to narrow limits, but were steady.

Closing prices:

Oats: Oct. ½ higher 70; Dec. ½ higher 69½; May ½ higher 69½; Jly not open.

Barley: Oct. ½ higher 96½; Dec. 1½ higher 95; May 1½ higher 93½; Jly 94 cent.

Flax: Oct. ½ lower 2.94½; Dec. ¾ higher 2.95-2.95½; M 1 higher 3.00½-3.01; Jly ¾ higher 2.95½.

Rye: Oct. ½ higher 1.07½; Dec. ¾ higher 1.06; May ¾ higher 1.15; Jly not open.

Prices for class two wheat for export to countries outside IWA: 1 Nov 1.61; 2 1.57; 3 1.50; 4 1.37; 5 1.25; 6 1.31; 1 Durum 1.90; 2 1.87; 3 1.87; IWA and domestic prices: 1 Nov 1.61; 2 1.57; 3 1.50; 4 1.37; 5 1.25; 6 1.31; 1 domestic Durum 1.84; 2 1.80; 3 1.87.

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Tax Reduction Is Forecast

OTTAWA (CP)—The government Monday threw out what appeared to be a hint it plans to reduce taxes to fulfil an election pledge.

"Changes in certain of the taxing statutes will be submitted for your approval," the government said in the throne speech read by Queen Elizabeth.

The mere mention of this in the throne speech appeared to be in line with previous statements by Progressive Conservative spokesmen that tax cuts may be coming.

During election campaigning last spring, Prime Minister Diefenbaker stated:

After the Conservatives took office June 21, Finance Minister Fleming said he plans to take steps this fall to fulfil the election promise of his leader.

"There has been some speculation that the government's tax proposals will be presented to the new Parliament not as a formal new budget, but as amendments to the 1957-58 budget brought down by the Liberals last spring.

The throne speech wording appeared to confirm this speculation. It spoke of amendments to the "taxing statutes" which would mean amendments to existing legislation or to the existing budget.

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